

ARNOLD'S LITERARY READING-BOOKS

IN GOLDEN REALMS

An English Reading-Book for
Junior Forms

"Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen"

J. KEATS

LONDON
EDWARD ARNOLD
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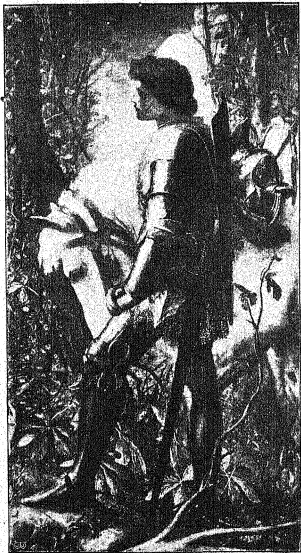
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EDITOR'S NOTE

THE first aim of the compiler of this little book has been to please the young reader, the second to make the readings as suggestive as possible to the teacher of literature and history, and to the educator generally.

For permission to insert "The Cyclops" from Mr. Church's "Stories from Homer" acknowledgments are due to Messrs. Seeley and Co., Ltd., and for Miss Ingelow's poem, "Echo and the Ferry," to Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co. The story of the "Last Fight of Roland and Oliver" is told chiefly from Messrs. Way and Spencer's translation of the "Song of Roland," published by Mr. David Nutt.



SIR GALAHAD.

(From the picture by G. F. Watts, R.A., at Eton College.)

(Copyright photo by F. Hollyer.)

IN GOLDEN REALMS

BRIAR ROSE.

ONCE upon a time there lived a King and Queen who lamented every day because they had no children. One day a frog came before the Queen, and, croaking, said: "Thy wish shall be accomplished, and thou shalt have a little daughter."

And it happened as the frog had said: the Queen had a little child, who was so beautiful that the King was almost overcome with joy, and ordered a great feast. He not only invited his relatives, friends, and acquaintances, but also the wise women, who could endow his daughter with fairy gifts. There were thirteen of them, but only twelve were invited, as he had only twelve golden plates for them.

The feast was conducted with great pomp, and at the end of it the wise women gave the King's child their wonderful gifts. The first gave her goodness, the second beauty, the third riches, and so to the eleventh, till she was promised all that can be wished for in the world.

Before the twelfth could speak in walked the thirteenth. She wished to be revenged for not having been invited; and, without saluting or noticing anyone, cried with a loud voice: "In her fifteenth year the King's daughter shall prick her finger with a spindle, and fall down dead!" And, without another word, she turned round and left the hall.

Everyone was alarmed; but the twelfth, who had not yet spoken, stepped forward. She could not undo the wicked decree, but she could soften it. So she said: "The King's daughter shall not die, but a deep sleep shall fall upon her, in which she shall remain for a hundred years."

The King, who wished to preserve his child, gave an order that all the spindles in his kingdom should be burnt.

In every respect the Princess soon proved that she had all the good gifts of the fairies; for she was so beautiful, so amiable, and so clever, that those who saw her could not help loving her. It happened that on the day when she was just fifteen years old the King and Queen were away, and the maiden was left alone in the castle, and she took a fancy to explore it. So she walked from room to room, through galleries and passages, till she came at last to an old tower.

She ascended the narrow, winding staircase, till at length she came to a little door. In the lock was stuck a rusty key, and as she turned it the door sprang open, and there, in a small room, sat an old woman spinning flax.

"Good-morning, old lady," said the Princess. "What are you doing?"

"I am spinning," she replied, nodding her head.

"And what is this funny thing that springs about so?" the Princess asked, at the same time taking the spindle in her hand and trying to spin. Scarcely had she given the wheel one turn when the bad fairy's prophecy was fulfilled—the point of the spindle stuck into her finger. At the same moment the King's daughter fell back on a bed which stood near, while a deep sleep came upon her; and not only on the Princess, but on the whole of the inhabitants of the castle—the King and Queen, who had returned and were in the State chamber, and all their household with them.

This sleep fell also on the horses in the stable, the dogs in the outer Court, the pigeons on the roof, the flies on the

wall—yes, and even the fire that flickered on the hearth became still and slept. The meat roasting before the fire stayed its hissing; the cook in the kitchen, who was just going to box the ears of the scullion, let his hand drop and sank to sleep; the wind lay at rest, and upon the trees which surrounded the castle not a leaf stirred.

In a few hours there sprung up around the castle a hedge of thorns, which year after year grew higher and higher, till at last nothing could be seen of the castle above it—even the roof nor the flag on the tower.

A legend spread all over the country of the "Sleeping Beauty," as the King's daughter was called. And from time to time the sons of Kings came to the spot, and tried to penetrate through the protecting hedge of thorns; but they found it impossible, for the thorns, as if they had hands, seized the young men, and held them so fast that they could not free themselves, and died a miserable death.

Many years passed away, and at length another Prince came to that part of the country, and heard an old man relate the story of the thorn-surrounded castle, in which the wonderful Sleeping Beauty, the King's daughter, lay, who had already slept for nearly a hundred years, with the King and Queen and the whole household.

The Prince had heard his grandfather talk of the fate of former Princes who had tried to force their way through the hedge of thorns, and how they were caught by the bushes and died a miserable death. But he said: "It matters not to me; I have no fear. I will see this beautiful Briar Rose." The good old man might try to dissuade him as he would, but he attended not to his words.

Now, the hundred years had come to a close, and the day arrived for Briar Rose to be awaked. When the Prince reached the hedge of thorns, he found nothing but large beautiful flowers, which separated from each other to allow him to pass, and closed again behind him like a wall.

In the castle yard he saw horses and staghounds sleeping

together. On the roof sat the pigeons, with their heads tucked under their wings.

In the castle the cook, the kitchen-maid, and even the flies on the wall, still slept; and in the saloon he found the King and Queen sleeping on their thrones, surrounded by the courtiers and the household, all slumbering peacefully. So deep was the stillness that he could hear his own breathing. However, he wandered on from room to room, till he reached the tower, where the beautiful Princess slept. She lay looking so beautiful that he could not turn away his eyes, but stooped and kissed her. At the touch Briar Rose opened her eyes and awoke, and looked smilingly at him.

Then they went down together to the King and Queen, who awoke, with the whole Court, and looked at each other with surprise; and everybody resumed the employment in which he had been engaged when the enchantment fell upon him. The horse rose and shook himself; the dog sprang up and barked; the pigeons drew out their heads from behind their wings, plumed their feathers, and flew to the field; even the fire aroused itself, and its flickering flame soon burned into a steady blaze, to roast the dinner; and, more than all this, the thorn-hedge round the castle sank down and disappeared.

The marriage of the Prince and Princess was celebrated in a very short time, with great splendour, and they lived happily to the end.

From "Fairy Tales" by the Brothers Grimm.

*THE STORY OF CONN-EDA; OR, THE GOLDEN
APPLES OF LOUGH ERNE.*

I.

THERE once lived in the western regions of the Isle of Destiny* a powerful King named Conn, who held sway from the island of Rathlin to the mouth of the Shannon by sea, and as far as the glittering length† by land. The King was good as well as great, and was dearly beloved by his people.

He had wedded a British Princess named Eda, who was the counterpart of the King in every way, for whatever virtue was lacking in the one the other could supply. The unseen powers smiled upon their union, for during their reign the earth brought forth abundantly—the trees bore fruit ninefold, the rivers, lakes, and seas teemed with fish, and the cattle thrived as never before. It is needless to state that the people who dwelt in the land of Conn were the happiest on the face of the wide expanse of earth. It was during his reign that Ireland gained among foreign nations the title of the “Happy Isle of the West.”

King Conn and his good Queen Eda were blessed with a son, whom they named Conn-eda, because at his birth the Druids foretold that he would inherit the good qualities of both father and mother. As he grew in years he grew in grace of person and of heart. He was the idol of his parents and the boast of his people. This career of glory, however, was doomed to suffer a check—at least, for a time—for the good Queen took a sudden and severe illness, of which she died in a few days. Thus her husband, her son, and all her people were plunged into great depth of grief and sorrow.

For a year and a day the good King and his people mourned the loss of Queen Eda, and at the end of this time

* Ireland.

† *I.e.*, of the Shannon.

King Conn unwillingly yielded to the wishes of his Druids and his counsellors and took to wife the daughter of his Arch-Druid. The new Queen seemed to walk in the footsteps of Eda for some years, and was the joy of her subjects. But in time, having had several children, she began to be jealous of Conn-eda, who, as she knew, was to succeed his father; and she had a son of her own.

She allowed the wicked feelings of jealousy to take complete possession of her, and at last resolved to do all in her power to bring about the death or exile of Conn-eda. She began by trying to poison the minds of the King and his people against the Prince with lying tales. But King Conn only laughed at her; the people would not believe her stories; and as for the Prince, he bore his trials patiently, and returned his stepmother good for evil. The Queen then made up her mind to consult an enchantress.

In the early dawn of morning she hied to the cabin of a witch, and told her the cause of her trouble. "I cannot help you," said the woman, "till you name the reward." "What do you require?" asked the Queen, all impatience. "Just this," replied the enchantress: "you must fill the cavity of my arm with wool, and the hole I shall bore with my distaff with red wheat." "This shall be done," said the Queen.

The enchantress thereupon stood in the door of her hut, and, bending her arm into a circle with her side, told the Queen's servants to thrust the wool into her cabin through her arm, and she did not allow them to cease till all the space within was filled with wool. She then mounted the roof of her brother's house, and, having made a hole through it with her distaff, caused grain to be poured through it until the house was filled up to the roof with red wheat. "Now," said the Queen, "since you have received your reward, tell me how I can gain my desire."

"Take the chess-board and chess," said the enchantress, "and invite the Prince to play with you. You will win the

first game, but before you begin you shall agree with him that the winner is to be at liberty to impose any conditions upon the loser. When you win you shall cause the Prince either to go into exile or get for you, within a year and a day, the three golden apples that grow in the garden, the black steed and the wonderful hound called Samer, which are in the possession of the King of the lake-people who dwell in Lough Erne. These things are so precious and so well guarded that he can never gain them in his own power; and if he rashly attempts to seek them, he will lose his life."

The Queen, greatly pleased, lost no time in carrying out the instruction of the wise woman. She won the game, but so great was her anxiety to get the Prince completely in her power that she challenged him to play a second time, when, to her great grief, Conn-eda easily won. "Now," said the Prince, "since you won the first game, you must name your conditions first." "Then," answered the Queen, "you must get me the three golden apples that grow in the garden, the black steed, and the hound of magic powers which are in keeping of the King of Lough Erne within a year and a day; or, if you fail, you must go into exile and never return, except you surrender yourself to lose your head."

"Well, then," said the Prince, "you, in your turn, must sit on the pinnacle of yonder tower till my return, and take neither food nor drink of any kind except what red wheat you can pick up on the point of your bodkin. But if I do not return within a year and a day, you are at perfect liberty to come down."

II.

Conn-eda then made ready to set out on his perilous journey, and before he left the palace saw the Queen ascend to the place where she was to remain exposed to all weathers for a year and a day.

The Prince first visited the great Druid Fionn Dadhna, with whom he was very friendly, and who received him with much kindness. After they had partaken of refreshments, consisting of the newest of food and the oldest of wine, the Druid asked the Prince the reason for his visit and for his sorrow, for Conn-eda appeared to be deeply troubled in mind.

The Prince told his friend all that had happened, and begged for his help. "I cannot assist you at present," replied the Druid, "but I will retire to my grove at sun-rising on the morrow, and learn what can be done to assist you." This he did on the following morning, and when he returned he called Conn-eda aside, and said to him: "My son, I fear you are required by someone who wishes your destruction to attempt something almost impossible. No one could have advised the Queen in the matter except the greatest Druidess now in Ireland, who is the sister to the King of Lough Erne. I cannot interfere in your behalf; but go to the bird with the human head, and if you can be helped that bird can do it, because he knows all things that are past, present, and to come. It is difficult to reach him, and more difficult still to get an answer from him; but I will help you as far as I can."

The Arch-Druid then gave these instructions to the Prince: "Take," said he, "yonder shaggy little steed and mount him at once, and the horse will take you to the abode of the bird, which will appear in three days. But, lest the bird should refuse to answer you, take this precious stone and present it to him; then he will give you a ready answer." The Prince took the stone, heartily thanked the Druid, and, having mounted the little shaggy horse, set off without delay. According to his instructions, he let the reins fall loose upon the horse's neck, and allowed it to take whichever road it chose. This little animal had the gift of speech, and was a magic horse, as we shall see.

The Prince soon reached the hiding-place of the bird, and

asked how he could fulfil the Queen's hard conditions. Then he presented the stone, and the bird, having taken it in his beak, flew to a high rock and thus addressed the Prince: "Conn-eda, son of the King of Cruachan," he cried in a loud, croaking, human voice, "remove the stone just under your right foot, and take the ball of iron and cup you find under it; then mount your horse, cast the ball before you, and when you have done so your horse will tell you what to do." The bird, having said this, flew out of sight.

Conn-eda took great care to do exactly as he had been told. The ball rolled on at a steady pace, and the little horse followed it till they reached the shore of Lough Erne. Here the ball rolled into the water and sank.

"Alight now," said the horse, "and put your hand into mine ear. Take from thence the small bottle of *icé* (all heal) and the little basket, and remount with speed." Conn-eda did so, and they went on their way. Soon the water of the lake was above their heads, and the ball again appeared, rolling along until it came to the margin, across which was a road guarded by three frightful serpents, hissing, yawning and showing the most formidable fangs.

"Now," said the horse, "open the basket, and cast from thence a piece of meat into the mouth of each serpent; then secure yourself in your seat. If your aim is true we shall pass them safely, otherwise we are lost."

Conn-eda flung the pieces of meat with unerring aim. "Bear a benison and a victory," said the little horse, "for you will win and prosper." So saying, he sprang aloft and cleared in his leap the river and ford, seven measures beyond the margin. "Are you still mounted, Prince?" he asked. "It has taken only half my exertion to remain so," replied Conn-eda. "You deserve to succeed," returned the little steed; "one danger is past; two more remain."

They went onward after the ball until they came within sight of a great mountain flaming with fire. "Make ready for another dangerous leap," said the horse. The Prince

seated himself as securely as his trembling limbs would allow, and the little steed sprang from the earth and flew like an arrow over the burning mountain. "Are you still alive, Conn-eda?" inquired the faithful animal. "Just alive and no more, for I'm greatly scorched," answered the Prince. "Since you are yet alive, I feel sure you are destined to do great things," said the Druidic steed. "Our greatest dangers are over, and I have great hopes that we shall overcome the next and last."

After they had travelled a short distance the steed said: "Alight now, and anoint your wounds with the *icé*." The Prince at once did so, and as soon as he had rubbed the salve over his wounds he became as whole and fresh as he had been before. He then remounted, and, following the ball, soon came in sight of a great city surrounded by high walls.

III.

The only gate of the city that could be seen was guarded not by sentinels, but by two great towers, which flashed forth fiery flames. "Alight here," said the steed, "and take a small knife from my other ear. With this knife you shall kill and slay me. Then wrap yourself in my hide, and you shall enter the city unhurt. When once you are within there is no danger. You can pass and repass as you will. All I ask of you is that when once you are within the gates you will return and drive away the birds of prey from my body; also that you will drop upon it some of the salve, and then dig a pit and bury it."

"Nay," said the Prince with decision; "come what may, I never will sacrifice a friend to save myself. I am prepared to meet death itself rather than do as you appear to wish." "Heed not that," said the steed; "do as I tell you and prosper." "Never, never!" exclaimed the Prince. "Well, then, son of the great Western monarch," was the

reply: "I tell you that both of us shall perish and never meet again. But if you do as I say things will change in a happier manner than you may imagine. Trust to me. So far I have never misled you."

When the Prince found that his noble steed could not be persuaded, he took the knife out of his ear with great reluctance, and with a faltering and trembling hand pointed the weapon at his throat. His eyes were bathed in tears; but no sooner had he pointed the weapon to the throat of the little steed than the dagger, as if impelled by some magic power, flew forward, struck the horse in the neck, and the animal fell dead.

The Prince, too, fell to the earth, overcome with grief. When he recovered he saw that the steed was quite dead, and thought it best to follow out the instructions given him. The task of removing the skin occupied a few moments, and then, scarcely knowing what he was doing, he wrapped himself in it and entered the city gate without opposition. It was a very populous city, and an extremely wealthy place; but its beauty and magnificence had no charms for Conn-eda, because the thought of the loss of his noble horse was uppermost in his mind.

He had scarcely moved more than fifty paces when he remembered the last request of his steed. Hastily he left the town and made his way to the place where he had left the dead body. There he found ravens and other birds of prey tearing at the flesh of his dear horse. At once he put them to flight; then, taking the jar of *icé* from his bosom, he proceeded to anoint the body. Scarcely had the salve touched the flesh when, to the great surprise of Conn-eda, it began to change, and soon assumed the form of one of the handsomest and noblest young men the world had ever seen. In the twinkling of an eye the Prince was locked in his warm embrace.

When one had recovered from his ecstasy of joy, and the other from his surprise, the stranger said, "Most noble

Prince, you are the best sight I ever saw with my eyes, and I am the most fortunate being in the world for having met you. Behold in my person, changed to the natural shape, your little shaggy steed. I am the brother of the King of the city, and it was the wicked Druid Fionn Dadhna who kept me so long in bondage ; but he was forced to give me up when you came to consult him, for my conditions were then fulfilled ; yet I could not recover my shape till you had acted as you did. It was my own sister who urged the Queen to send you on this quest, and it shall bring you much good. Come, my friend and deliverer, the apples, the steed, and the hound shall be yours."

The two young men went at once to the palace of the King of Lough Erne, where they were both received with great joy. When the purpose of Conn-eda's visit became known to the King he freely consented to bestow on the Prince the apples, the steed, and the hound, on condition that he remained in the palace, an honoured guest, until he set out on his journey to fulfil his promise to the Queen. Conn-eda consented, and remained in the royal residence, in the enjoyment of every pleasure that his heart could desire.

When the time of his departure came the three golden apples were plucked from the crystal tree in the midst of the pleasure-garden, and placed in his bosom ; the hound Samer was leashed, and the leash put into his hands ; and the black steed, richly harnessed, was got in readiness for him to mount. The King himself helped him on horseback, and both he and his brother assured him that he need not fear burning mountains or hissing serpents, because none would impede him, mounted as he was on the coal-black steed.

Conn-eda then took tender leave of his dear friend and the King his brother. He proceeded on his way without obstruction, and in due time came in sight of his father's city, where the Queen was spending her last day on the

tower, hoping that the sun would set before the arrival of the Prince. But her hopes were vain. At first she would not believe the tidings of the courtiers who had brought news of the Prince's approach; but when she saw him mounted on a foaming, black and richly-harnessed steed, and leading a strange kind of animal by a silver chain, she knew only too well that he had returned in triumph. In excess of grief at her disappointment she cast herself from the top of the tower and was dashed to pieces.

Conn-eda had a welcome reception from his father, who had mourned for him as lost. When the rejoicings ordered for his return were over the Prince planted the three golden apples in his garden, and instantly a great tree grew up bearing similar fruit. The tree caused all the district to produce an abundance of crops and fruits, and the land of King Conn became as fertile as the dominions of the lake-people whose King lived in Lough Erne. The hound and the steed were also of great use to the Prince, who, in time, succeeded his father and reigned well and prosperously for many years. It was after the name Conn-eda that the province of Connaught was so called.

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN.

A CHILD'S STORY.

I.

HAMELIN Town's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover city;
The river Weser, deep and wide,
Washes its wall on the southern side;
A pleasanter spot you never spied;
But, when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin, was a pity.

II.

Rats!

They fought the dogs, and killed the cats,
 And bit the babies in the cradles,
 And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
 And licked the soup from the cook's own ladles,
 Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
 Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
 And even spoiled the women's chats,
 By drowning their speaking
 With shrieking and squeaking
 In fifty different sharps and flats.

III.

At last the people in a body
 To the Town Hall came flocking:
 "'Tis clear," cried they, "our Mayor's a noddy;
 And as for our Corporation—shocking
 To think we buy gowns lined with ermine
 For dolts that can't or won't determine
 What's best to rid us of our vermin!
 You hope, because you're old and obese
 To find in the furry civic robe ease?
 Rouse up, sirs! Give your brains a racking
 To find the remedy we're lacking,
 Or sure as fate, we'll send you packing!"
 At this the Mayor and Corporation
 Quaked with a mighty consternation.

IV.

An hour they sate in council,
 At length the Mayor broke silence:
 "For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell;
 I wish I were a mile hence!
 It's easy to bid one rack one's brain—
 I'm sure my poor head aches again
 I've scratched it so and all in vain.
 O for a trap, a trap, a trap!"
 Just as he said this, what should hap
 At the chamber door but a gentle tap?

"Bless us," cried the Mayor, "what's that?"
(With the Corporation as he sat,
Looking little though wondrous fat;
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister
Than a too-long-opened oyster,
Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous
For a plate of turtle green and glutinous)
"Only a scraping of shoes on the mat?
Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat!"

V.

"Come in!" the Mayor cried, looking bigger;
And in did come the strangest figure!
His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red;
And he himself was tall and thin,
With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,
No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,
But lips where smiles went out and in—
There was no guessing his kith and kin:
And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire.
Quoth one: "It's as my great-grandsire,
Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,
Had walked this way from his painted tomb-stone?"

VI.

He advanced to the council-table:
And, "Please your honours," said he, "I'm able,
By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep, or swim, or fly, or run,
After me so as you never saw!
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole, and toad, and newt, and viper;
And people call me the Pied Piper."

(And here they noticed round his neck
 A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
 To match with his coat of the selfsame cheque ;
 And at the scarf's end hung a pipe ;
 And his fingers, they noticed, were ever straying
 As if impatient to be playing
 Upon this pipe, as low it dangled
 Over his vesture so old-fangled.)
 "Yet," said he, "poor piper as I am,
 In Tartary I freed the Cham,
 Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats ;
 I eased in Asia the Nizam
 Of a monstrous brood of vampyre-bats ;
 And, as for what your brain bewilders,
 If I can rid your town of rats
 Will you give me a thousand guilders ?"
 "One ? fifty thousand !" was the exclamation
 Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

VII.

Into the street the Piper stept,
 Smiling first a little smile,
 As if he knew what magic slept
 In his quiet pipe the while ;
 Then, like a musical adept,
 To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
 And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled,
 Like a candle flame where salt is sprinkled ;
 And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,
 You heard as if an army muttered ;
 And the muttering grew to a grumbling ;
 And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling ;
 And out of the houses the rats came tumbling.
 Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
 Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,
 Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
 Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
 Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
 Families by tens and dozens,

Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives—
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing,
And step for step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the river Weser
Wherein all plunged and perished !
—Save one who, stout as Julius Caesar,
Swam across and lived to carry
(As he, the manuscript he cherished)
To Rat-land home his commentary :
Which was, "At the first shrill notes of the pipe,
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
Into a cider-press's gripe :
And a moving away of pickle-tub-boards,
And a leaving ajar of conserve-cupboards,
And a drawing the corks of train-oil-flasks,
And a breaking the hoops of butter-casks ;
And it seemed as if a voice
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery
Is breathed) called out, 'Oh rats, rejoice !
The world is grown to one vast drysaltery !
So munch on, crunch on, take your nunchcon,
Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon !'
And just as a bulky sugar-punchcon,
All ready staved, like a great sun shone
Glorious scarce an inch before me,
Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore me !'
—I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

VIII.

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple.
"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long poles !
Poke out the nests and block up the holes !
Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace
Of the rats !" —when suddenly, up the face
Of the Piper perked in the market-place,
With a "First, if you please, my thousand guilders !"

IX.

A thousand guilders ! The Mayor looked blue ;
 So did the Corporation too.
 For council dinners made rare havoc
 With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave, Hock ;
 And half the money would replenish
 Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.
 To pay this sum to a wandering fellow
 With a gipsy coat of red and yellow !
 " Beside," quoth the Mayor with a knowing wink,
 " Our business was done at the river's brink ;
 We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,
 And what's dead can't come to life, I think.
 So, friend, we're not the folk to shrink
 From the duty of giving you something for drink,
 And a matter of money to put in your poke ;
 But, as for the guilders, what we spoke
 Of them, as you very well know, was in joke.
 Beside, our losses have made us thrifty ;
 A thousand guilders ! Come, take fifty !"

X.

The Piper's face fell, and he cried
 " No trifling ! I can't wait, beside !
 I've promised to visit by dinner-time
 Bagdat, and accept the prime
 Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's rich in,
 For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,
 Of a nest of scorpions no survivor :
 With him I proved no bargain-driver,
 With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver !
 And folks who put me in a passion
 May find me pipe to another fashion."

XI.

" How ?" cried the Mayor, " d'ye think I'll brook
 Being worse treated than a Cook ?
 Insulted by a lazy ribald
 With idle pipe and vesture piebald ?

You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst,
Blow your pipe there till you burst !"

XII.

Once more he stept into the street,
And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane ;
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave the enraptured air)
There was a rustling, that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hustling,
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering
Little hands clapping, and little tongues chattering,
And, like fowls in a farm-yard when barley is scattering,
Out came the children running.
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

XIII.

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,
Unable to move a step, or cry
To the children merrily skipping by,
—Could only follow with the eye
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
But now the Mayor was on the rack,
And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,
As the Piper turned from the High Street
To where the Weser rolled its waters
Right in the way of their sons and daughters !
However he turned from south to west,
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,
And after him the children pressed ;
Great was the joy in every breast.

"He never can cross that mighty top!
He's forced to let the piping drop,
And we shall see our children stop!"
When, lo, as they reached the mountain-side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed;
And the Piper advanced and the children followed,
And when all were in to the very last,
The door in the mountain-side shut fast.
Did I say all? No! One was lame,
And could not dance the whole of the way;
And in after years, if you would blame
His sadness, he was used to say:
"It's dull in our town since my playmates left!
I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the Piper also promised me.
For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town and just at hand,
Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And everything was strange and new;
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,
And their dogs outran our fallow deer,
And honey-bees had lost their stings,
And horses were born with eagles' wings;
And just as I became assured
My lame foot would be speedily cured,
The music stopped, and I stood still,
And found myself outside the Hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go now limping as before,
And never hear of that country more!"

XIV.

Alas, alas for Hamelin!

There came into many a burgher's pate
A text which says, that Heaven's gate
Opes to the rich at as easy rate



THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN.

(From the Original Painting by Arthur A. Dixon, Esq., with the artist's permission.)

As the needle's eye takes a camel in !
The Mayor sent east, west, north, and south,
To offer the Piper by word of mouth,

Wherever it was men's lot to find him,
Silver and gold to his heart's content,
If he'd only return the way he went,

And bring the children behind him.
But when they saw 'twas a lost endeavour,
And Piper and dancers were gone for ever,
They made a decree that lawyers never

Should think their records dated duly
If, after the day of the month and year,
These words did not as well appear,
"And so long after what happened here

On the twenty-second of July,
Thirteen hundred and seventy-six !"
And the better in memory to fix
The place of the children's last retreat,
They called it the Pied Piper's Street—
Where any one playing on pipe or tabor
Was sure for the future to lose his labour.
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern

To shock with mirth a street so solemn ;
But opposite the place of the cavern

They wrote the story on a column,
And on the great church-window painted
The same, to make the world acquainted
How their children were stolen away ;
And there it stands to this very day,
And I must not omit to say

That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people that ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress
On which their neighbours lay such stress,
To their fathers and mothers having risen
Out of some subterraneous prison
Into which they were trepanned
Long time ago in a mighty band
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,
But how or why they don't understand.

XV.

So, Willy,* let me and you be wipers
 Of scores out with all men—especially pipers;
 And, whether they pipe us free from rats or from mice,
 If we've promised them aught, let us keep our promise.
R. Browning.

THE LAST FIGHT OF ROLAND AND OLIVER.

"In the lost battle we have won."

I.

CHARLEMAGNE, the mighty Emperor, led a great army of his trusty Franks to fight against the Saracens of Spain. One by one the strong walled cities fell before the Christian Franks till at last only Saragossa remained in the hands of the heathen Saracens.

Marsila, King of Saragossa, called a council of his captains. "Charlemagne and his warriors are upon us," he cried. "Tell me, my lords, what shall we do?" Thereupon one of the captains advised the King to send envoys to meet the conqueror with offers of submission. Charlemagne would then leave the country, and the Saracens would be free to do as they pleased, without regard to their promises.

The envoys therefore set out ten in number, clothed in rich garments, mounted on milk-white mules, and bearing in their hands the olive-branches of peace. They found the Frankish host resting after a victory, and were led at once to the Emperor. He sat beneath a pine-tree on a chair of massive gold. His beard and hair were white as driven snow, his face full of kingly pride and majesty. He seemed a giant in stature and a worthy leader and captain of heroic warriors.

The Emperor listened graciously to the message borne

* Willie Macready, son of the famous actor of the same name.

by the envoys, and promised to give his answer on the following day. When the morning dawned Charlemagne called together the chiefs of his host in council. Among them came Roland and Oliver, the fame of whose valour and friendship had spread through many lands; the Archbishop Turpin, more of a soldier than a priest; Ganelon, the stepfather of Roland, a knight of fair fame, but one who was afterwards to prove a traitor to his lord and his comrades in arms.

The Emperor had doubts of the good faith of Marsila. The promises of the Saracen King seemed fair, but what were the thoughts of his heart? Roland was for carrying on the war to the end. *He* would not trust the Saracens, who had already made promises only to break them. Ganelon opposed him, called him rash and hare-brained, and advised the Emperor to trust the pledges of the Saracen King. In the end the advice of Ganelon was taken, and he was chosen to carry the Emperor's reply to the Court of Marsila.

He set out at once on his journey to Saragossa, travelling alone and bearing the herald's staff. On the way he overtook the Saracen envoys, the chief of whom had rightly guessed that Ganelon was bitterly jealous of Roland, and would be only too glad to do him an injury.

He was therefore able, with wily words, to persuade Ganelon to become a traitor to his trust.

The travellers before long arrived at Saragossa, and were taken to the presence of the King. There Ganelon delivered his message, and then took his first step on the path of treachery which no true knight should tread. He advised Marsila to surprise the rearguard of the Frankish army while in retreat from Spain, and gave the King much information, which afterwards proved of great use to him. The traitor also promised to see that Roland was placed in command of the rearguard. In this manner he would be able to avenge himself on his hated rival.

The keys of the city were then delivered to Ganelon as a sign of submission, and he set out for the Emperor's camp. When he arrived there he told the result of his mission. He was graciously thanked by his royal master, and word was given to break up the camp and begin the retreat across the Pyrenees into France. The trumpets gave the signal, the camp was broken up, and the great host of weary warriors turned their faces to the home from which they had been exiled for seven long and laborious years.

II.

Before setting out on the march Charlemagne selected from his warriors a sufficient force to form a strong rear-guard. The command of this body was given to Roland, and he was bidden to guard the passes in the mountains till the whole army had safely crossed the barrier between Spain and France. It was Ganelon who named Roland to the Emperor as the man best fitted for the task.

It was the post of danger, and therefore the post of honour, and Roland was only too proud and eager to take command. He quickly armed himself in coat of mail, mounted his fiery charger, and, girded with his golden-bilted sword Durendal, rode forward to a small hillock, where he hoisted his ensign. He was at once joined by Oliver, his brother-at-arms, by Turpin, the warrior-priest, and by many others of the leaders, who were proud to serve beneath the banner of Roland.

Then the army set out. The passes were held by bodies of men under Roland's command, and the Frankish warriors marched steadily upward towards the high ground, from which they gained their first glimpse of the sweet land of France, the home of all they held most dear. Soon they began the descent into level ground, and before long the greater number were marching through the plains of Gascony.

While the last of the Frankish army were climbing the steep mountain passes, Oliver, from his post on a piece of rising ground, heard in the distance the tramp of a great host, and the sound of a thousand trumpets. "We shall yet do battle with the Saracens, comrade!" he said, turning to Roland. "God grant it!" said the other; "for right is on our side, and the minstrels of the after-time shall sing of us no songs of blame and reproach." Before long the brave leaders saw in the distance the armour of a great Saracen host flashing in the sunlight, and knew only too well that Ganelon had played them false.

Beyond the mountain barrier a storm was at that time raging. Darkness as of night had fallen suddenly, then the lightning flashed, the thunder rolled, the earth quaked, and the blinding hail fell heavily as the warriors of Charlemagne marched steadily through the land. They knew not that heaven and earth were mourning for the approaching end of a hero.

Before long the Saracens had reached the plain at the foot of the mountains, and their design was clear. Oliver turned to Roland. "Sound a blast on thy horn, brother!" he cried; "and, though he be many leagues away, Charlemagne will hear it and return to our aid." "Shall I lose my name and renown, then?" asked Roland in scorn. "Nay, we will fight, though it be against odds, and these heathen shall rue the day that they dared to give us battle." Again and yet again Oliver urged his friend to sound his horn, for he saw plainly that the small rearguard could not overcome the Saracen in his strength. But Roland was steadfast. "God forbid," he cried, "that I should bring such shame on my father's race and name! We are few, they are many, I grant ye; the more do I yearn for the fray. Play the man! We can but die. Better is death than the life of a craven."

Then the leader gathered together his warriors, and prepared to face the foe. "See the Saracens!" cried Turpin

to the assembled heroes. "See how they come on in their pride! But it was Charles, our King, who bade us remain here, and to yield to fear is to fail in our duty to him. Stand ye up for the right! If we fall in the battle, ours will be the martyr's glorious death." So the leaders of the Franks with fiery words of exhortation roused the spirit of their men. Oliver, too, now added his voice to that of Roland and of Turpin, and preparations were made for the great fight.

Forth from the Saracen vanguard rode a richly-dressed and haughty champion. With words of scorn and pride he taunted the Frankish warriors. Roland spurred forward his horse, and drove his strong lance through the heart of the boaster, who fell dead from his charger. "To the battle, ye Franks!" cried the victor; "the first blow is ours!"

In a few moments the two armies had closed in desperate conflict. Before the fierce onset of the Frankish heroes the Saracens fell in hundreds. Roland and Oliver performed deeds of desperate valour as they had done in many a former battle. Turpin was among the foremost, and laid about him lustily. Again and again the Saracens were driven back, but they seemed in number like the sands on the seashore; and as soon as one body was overcome another came on to the charge.

Then the ring of twelve brave knights, the famous paladins of Charlemagne, was broken by the fall of one of their number. Another fell and yet another, till six lay dead on the field, and the number of their followers was reduced to sixty men. Roland looked round in dismay. Even his strength was failing, and he resolved to sound his horn, that the King might, at least, bring vengeance on their enemies for the death of his brave knights. He blew one mighty blast and then another upon his horn, and so great was the strain on his fast-failing strength that the blood burst from his temples.

The Emperor, now thirty leagues away, heard the sound of that horn, and made ready to hasten to the help of his rearguard.

Once more the Saracens came on to the attack. Marsila sallied forth to fight with Roland single handed. Three of the famous twelve fell beneath his sword before he was met by Roland himself. Then the shining blade and golden hilt of Durendal flashed in the light, and Marsila's sword-hand fell to the earth, severed at the wrist. The King turned and fled in great pain, filled with dismay.

III.

Before long the Saracens recovered from the panic which had come upon them when Marsila fled from his conflict with Roland. A body of negro soldiers advanced to the final attack. Roland had fifty men remaining, Turpin was still to the fore, but the brave Oliver was sorely wounded to death. "Woe to me!" cried Roland, as he gazed in the face of his beloved friend. "Where shall I find a comrade like to thee? And our liege lord Charles; his loss is greater than words can say." So great was the hero's sorrow that he swooned as he sat in his saddle.

The anguish of his wound drove Oliver to madness. Not knowing what he did, he smote Roland, his comrade, on the head with his sword. The blow was strong with the strength of madness, and clove the helmet of Roland, though it did not harm his head. With eyes of pity he looked at his comrade, and said gently: "Friend, it is Roland thou smitest—Roland, who loveth thee!"

The face of Oliver was ashy pale; his eyes rolled; his strength failed; slowly and with pain he slid from his horse, and the rough earth became his couch of death. "Lord, grant me," he prayed, "a place at Thy right hand. Bless my King, my country, and Roland, my dear comrade!" Then his hands unclasped, his head drooped, and his spirit fled.

The negro warriors were now closing round him, and Roland had little time to mourn the loss of his comrade. Manfully he faced the foe side by side with Turpin and one other survivor of the famous twelve. Turpin was struck from his horse and sorely wounded, but he nobly supported his friend Roland, who now longed for the coming of Charlemagne. Once more he blew a blast on his horn, and before long the sound of warlike trumpets was heard amid the mountains. "Charlemagne!" cried the enemy in despair. "He comes, the mighty Emperor, the avenger!"

Four hundred of them now banded together to lay Roland low. But with one last effort the Count spurred his good steed into the midst of them, and, turning as one man, they fled from the field. Roland's horse stumbled and fell dead. Then the hero looked about him, and his eye sought Turpin, who had so bravely stood by him to the last. The good priest and warrior lay not far away, and Roland knelt by his side to unlace his helmet. He laid him down gently upon the greensward. "Our comrades," he said, "they are sped, and lie dead on the field. I will seek them out and bear them to you."

So he turned and sought the paladins of Charlemagne, and brought them one by one to the dying bishop. He wept when he saw the forms of the goodly warriors, and raised his failing hands to bless them.

Then lifting his eyes he saw Roland stagger and fall near the body of Oliver. Spent as he was, he rose tottering, grasped the horn of Roland, and moved painfully towards a rippling stream hard by to bring water for his fainting leader. But his strength was sped, and he fell dead to the earth.

IV.

Roland recovered from his swoon, grasped once again his trusty sword and his horn, and set his face towards the mountains from whence in vain he had looked for timely

help. Fainting from loss of blood he fell again to the earth, and lay upon a mound above the field of the slain. Not far away lay a Saracen, who had pretended to be dead in order to escape taking his share in the fight. He saw Roland fall, and crept forward to deprive him of his sword—Durendal of the golden hilt—but as his cowardly hand grasped the blade the dying hero rallied, raised his horn, and with a mighty blow struck the craven dead at his feet.

Sword in hand the warrior rose. He was unwilling that Durendal should pass to another when his life was sped, so he raised it high above his head and rained blow after blow upon a sturdy rock, hoping to shatter the blade; but the steel rang true, and bounded unbroken from the rock at each blow. Then he laid it on the earth, placed his horn beside it, and threw himself down, turning his face towards the foe. With his last breath he asked pardon for his sins, commended his King, his country, and his friends to God, and then his soul passed, and the treachery of Ganelon the traitor knight was complete.

But vengeance was at hand. The Emperor Charles had reached the place of death, and when he saw the field strewn with his mighty dead his spirit rose in anger, and, urging onward his warriors, he overtook and utterly vanquished the Saracen host. Then he returned to the field of Roncesvalles, where Roland, Oliver, and Turpin had served him to the death, and with words of bitter grief mourned over his fallen heroes.

Meanwhile Ganelon had been disgraced and made a prisoner. The Emperor gave him into the hands of some of his camp-followers, who treated him with scorn and indignity. When the Frankish army reached the Emperor's capital the traitor was bound to a post and whipped before the eyes of his comrades and those who had of old served under his banner; then after trial he met the awful death of a traitor, the manner of which is too terrible to tell.

Such is the famous story of

"Roland and of Charlemagne
And the dead who deathless all
Fell at famous Roncesvalles."

THE BARBER'S STORY OF HIS BROTHER.

My fourth brother, Alnaschar, was cropped of his ears, O Prince of the Faithful.* He was a pauper, who begged alms by night and subsisted upon what he thus acquired by day; and our father was a very old man, and he fell sick and died, leaving to us seven hundred pieces of silver, of which each of us took his portion, namely, a hundred pieces.

Now my fifth brother, when he had received his share, was perplexed, not knowing what to do with it; but while he was in this state it occurred to his mind to buy with it all kinds of articles of glass, and to sell them and make profit. So he bought glass with his hundred pieces of silver, and put it in a large tray, and sat upon an elevated place to sell it, leaning his back against a wall.

And as he sat he meditated, and said within himself: "Verily, my whole stock consisteth of this glass. I will sell it for two hundred pieces of silver, and with the two hundred I will buy other glass, which I will sell for four hundred; and thus will I continue buying and selling until I have acquired great wealth. Then with this I will purchase all kinds of merchandise, and essences, and jewels, and so obtain vast gain. After that I will buy a handsome house, and mamlouks, and horses, and gilded saddles; and I will eat and drink, and I will not leave in the city a single singer, but I will have him brought to my house that I may hear his songs."

All this he calculated with the tray of glass lying before

* Haroun-al-Raschid, Caliph of Bagdad, to whom the story was told.

him. "Then," said he, "I will send to seek in marriage for me the daughters of kings and viziers, and I will demand as my wife the daughter of the Chief Vizier, for I have heard that she is endowed with perfect beauty and surprising loveliness; and I will give as her dowry a thousand pieces of gold. If her father consent, my wish is attained; and if he consent not, I will take her by force, in spite of him.

"Then I will purchase the apparel of kings and sultans, and cause to be made for me a saddle of gold set with jewels; after which I will ride every day upon a horse, with slaves behind me and before me, and go about through the streets and markets to amuse myself, while the people will salute me and pray for me.

"Then I will pay a visit to the Vizier, who is the father of the maiden, with mamlouks behind me and before me and on my right and on my left; and when he seeth me he will rise to me in humility and seat me in his own place, and he himself will sit down below me, because I am his son-in-law. I will then order one of the servants to bring a purse containing the pieces of gold which compose the dowry, and he will place it before the Vizier, and I will add to it another purse, that he may know my manly spirit and excessive generosity, and that the world is contemptible in my eye; and when he addresseth me with ten words I will answer him with two.

"And I will return to my house; and when any person cometh to me from the house of the Vizier I will clothe him with a rich dress; but if any come with a present I will return it; I will certainly not accept it. Then, on the day of the wedding, I will attire myself in the most magnificent of my dresses, and sit upon a mattress covered with silk; and when my wife cometh to me, like the full moon, decked with her ornaments and apparel, I will command her to stand before me, as stand the timid and the abject; and I will not look at her on account of the haughtiness of my spirit and the gravity of my wisdom.



THE ARABIAN STORY TELLER.

(From Horace Vernet's picture in the Wallace Gallery, by permission.)

"Then the maids will say: 'This, thy wife, or, rather, thy handmaid, awaiteth thy kind regard, and is standing before thee; then graciously bestow on her one glance, for the posture hath become painful to her.' Upon this I will raise my head, and look at her with one glance, and again incline my head downward.

"Then I will look at her through the corner of my eye, and command her to remain standing before me, that she may taste the savour of humiliation, and know that I am the Sultan of the Age. Then her mother will say to me: 'Oh my master, this is thy handmaid! Have compassion upon her and be gracious to her.' And she will order her to fill a cup with wine, and to put it to my mouth. So her daughter will say: 'Oh my lord, I beg thee that thou reject not the cup from thy slave; for verily I am thy slave.' But I will make her no reply; and she will urge me to take it, and will say, 'It must be drunk,' and will put it to my mouth; and upon this I will shake my hand in her face, and spurn her with my foot, and do thus."

So saying he kicked the tray of glass, which, being upon a place elevated above the ground, fell, and all that was in it broke; there escaped nothing; and he cried out and said: "All this is the result of my pride!" And he slapped his face and tore his clothes, the passengers gazing at him while he wept, and exclaimed: "Ah, oh my grief!"

From the "Arabian Nights."

THE ROSE UPON MY BALCONY.

THE rose upon my balcony, the morning air perfuming,
Was leafless all the winter time and pining for the spring;
You ask me why her breath is sweet, and why her cheek is
 blooming;
It is because the sun is out and birds begin to sing.

The nightingale, whose melody is through the greenwood ringing,
Was silent when the boughs were bare and winds were blowing
keen :

And if, mamma, you ask of me the reason of his singing,
It is because the sun is out and all the leaves are green.

Thus each performs his part, mamma : the birds have found their
voices,

The blowing rose a flush, mamma, her bonny cheek to dye ;
And there's sunshine in my heart, mamma, which wakens and
rejoices,

And so I sing and blush, mamma, and that's the reason why.

W. M. Thackeray.

FAIRIES' SONGS.

I.

OVER hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere ;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green :
The cowslips tall her pensioners be ;
In their gold coats spots you see ;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours.
I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

II.

You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen ;
Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong,
Come not near our fairy queen.
Philomel, with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby ;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby ; lulla, lulla, lullaby ;

Never harm,
 Nor spell nor charm,
 • Come our lovely lady nigh :
 So, good-night, with lullaby.

Weaving spiders, come not here :
 Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence
 Beetles black, approach not near ;
 Worm nor snail, do no offence.
 Philomel, with melody
 Sing in our sweet lullaby ;
 Lulla, lulla, lullaby ; lulla, lulla, lullaby ;
 Never harm,
 Nor spell nor charm,
 Come our lovely lady nigh :
 So, good-night, with lullaby.

III.

Now the hungry lion roars,
 And the wolf howls the moon ;
 Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,
 All with weary task fordone.
 Now the wasted brands do glow,
 Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,
 Puts the wretch that lies in woe
 In remembrance of a shroud.
 Now it is the time of night
 That the graves, all gaping wide,
 Every one lets forth his sprite,
 In the church-way paths to glide ;
 And we fairies, that do run
 By the triple Hecate's team,
 From the presence of the sun,
 Following darkness like a dream,
 Now are frolic ; not a mouse
 Shall disturb this hallowed house :
 I am sent with broom before,
 To sweep the dust behind the door.

W. Shakespeare.

THE GOLDEN TOUCH.

I.

ONCE upon a time there lived a very rich man, and a King besides, whose name was Midas; and he had a little daughter whom nobody but myself ever heard of, and whose name I either never knew or have entirely forgotten. So, because I love odd names for little girls, I choose to call her Marygold.

This King Midas was fonder of gold than of anything else in the world. He valued his royal crown chiefly because it was made of that precious metal. If he loved anything better or half so well, it was the one little maiden who played so merrily around her father's footstool.

But the more Midas loved his daughter, the more did he desire and seek for wealth. He thought, foolish man! that the best thing he could possibly do for this dear child would be to leave to her the greatest pile of yellow, glistening coin that had ever been heaped together since the world was made. Thus, he gave all his thoughts and all his time to this one purpose. If ever he happened to gaze for an instant at the gold-tinted clouds of sunset, he wished that they were real gold, and that they could be squeezed safely into his strong-box. When little Marygold ran to meet him with a bunch of buttercups and dandelions, he used to say: "Pooh, pooh, child! If these flowers were as golden as they look, they would be worth the plucking!"

And yet in his earlier days, before he was so entirely taken by this mad desire for riches, King Midas had shown a great taste for flowers. He had planted a garden in which grew the biggest and most beautiful and sweetest roses that any mortal ever saw or smelt. These roses were still growing in the garden, as large, as lovely, and as fragrant as when Midas used to pass whole hours in gazing at them

and inhaling their perfume. But now, if he looked at them at all, it was only to calculate how much the garden would be worth if each of the rose-petals were a thin plate of gold. And though he once was fond of music, the only music for poor Midas now was the chink of one coin against another.

At length Midas had got to be so unreasonable that he could scarcely bear to see or touch any object that was not gold. He made it his custom, therefore, to pass a large portion of every day in a dark and dreary apartment underground at the basement of his palace. It was here that he kept his wealth. To this dismal hole—for it was little better than a dungeon—Midas betook himself whenever he wanted to be particularly happy. Here, after carefully locking the door, he would take a bag of gold coin, or a gold cup as big as a washbowl, or a heavy golden bar, or a peck measure of gold-dust, and bring them from the obscure corners of the room into the one bright and narrow sunbeam that fell from the window. He valued the sunbeam for no other reason but that his treasure would not shine without its help. And then would he reckon over the coins in the bag, toss up the bar and catch it as it came down, sift the gold-dust through his fingers, look at the funny image of his own face as reflected in the polished cup, and whisper to himself: "Oh, Midas, rich King Midas, what a happy man art thou!"

II.

Midas called himself a happy man, but felt that he was not yet quite so happy as he might be. The very height of enjoyment would never be reached unless the whole world were to become his treasure-room, and be filled with yellow metal which should be all his own.

Now, I need hardly remind such wise little people as you are that in the old, old times, when King Midas was alive, a great many things came to pass which we should consider wonderful if they were to happen in our own day and

country; and, on the other hand, a great many things take place nowadays which seem not only wonderful to us, but at which the people of old times would have stared their eyes out. On the whole, I regard our own times as the stranger of the two, but, however that may be, I must go on with my story.

Midas was enjoying himself in his treasure-room one day, as usual, when he noticed a shadow fall over the heaps of gold, and, looking suddenly up, what should he see but the figure of a stranger standing in the bright and narrow sunbeam! It was a young man, with a cheerful and ruddy face. Whether it was that the imagination of King Midas threw a yellow tinge over everything, or whatever the cause might be, he could not help fancying that the smile with which the stranger regarded him had a kind of golden radiance in it. Certainly, although his figure kept out the sunshine, there was now a brighter gleam upon all the piled-up treasures than before. Even the remotest corners had their share of it, and were lighted up when the stranger smiled as with tips of flame and sparkles of fire.

The stranger gazed about the room, and when his bright smile had glistened upon all the golden objects that were there he turned again to Midas.

"You are a wealthy man, friend Midas!" he said. "I doubt whether any other four walls on earth contain so much gold as you have contrived to pile up in this room."

"I have done pretty well—pretty well," answered Midas in a discontented tone. "But, after all, it is but a trifle, when you consider that it has taken me my whole life to get it together. If one could live a thousand years, he might have time to grow rich."

"What!" exclaimed the stranger. "Then you are not satisfied?"

Midas shook his head.

"And, pray, what would satisfy you?" asked the stranger.

"Merely for the curiosity of the thing I should be glad to know."

Midas paused and thought. He felt that this stranger, with such a golden lustre in his good-humoured smile, had come hither with both the power and the purpose of granting his utmost wishes. Now, therefore, was the fortunate moment when he had but to speak and obtain whatever it might come into his head to ask. So he thought, and thought, and thought, and heaped up one golden mountain upon another in his mind without being able to imagine them big enough. At last a bright idea occurred to King Midas. It seemed really as bright as the glistening metal which he loved so much. Raising his head, he looked the shining stranger in the face.

"Well, Midas," observed his visitor, "I see that you have at length hit upon something that will satisfy you. Tell me your wish."

"It is only this," replied Midas. "I am weary of collecting my treasures with so much trouble, and behold-ing the heap so small after I have done my best. *I wish everything that I touch to be changed to gold!*"

The stranger's smile grew so very broad that it seemed to fill the room like an outburst of the sun.

"The Golden Touch!" exclaimed he. "You certainly deserve credit, friend Midas, for thinking of such a clever thing. But are you quite sure that this will satisfy you?"

"How could it fail?" said Midas.

"And will you never be sorry you have got it?"

"What could induce me?" asked Midas. "I ask nothing else to make me perfectly happy."

"Be it as you wish, then," replied the stranger, waving his hand in token of farewell. "To-morrow, at sunrise, you will find yourself gifted with the Golden Touch."

The figure of the stranger then became so exceedingly bright that Midas was forced to close his eyes. On opening them again he beheld only one yellow sunbeam in the room,

and all around him the glistening of the precious metal which he had spent his life in hoarding up.

III.

Whether Midas slept as usual that night the story does not say. Asleep or awake, however, his mind was probably in the state of a child's to whom a beautiful new plaything has been promised in the morning. At any rate, day had hardly peeped over the hills when King Midas was broad awake, and, stretching his arms out of bed, began to touch the objects that were within reach. He was anxious to prove whether the Golden Touch had really come, according to the stranger's promise.

So he laid his finger on a chair by the bedside and on various other things, but was very much disappointed to see that they remained of exactly the same substance as before. Indeed, he felt very much afraid that he had only dreamed about the shining stranger, or else that the latter had been making game of him. And what a miserable affair it would be if, after all his hopes, Midas must content himself with what little gold he could scrape together by ordinary means, instead of creating it by a touch!

All this while, it was only the gray of the morning, with but a streak of brightness along the edge of the sky, where Midas could not see it. He lay in a very sad mood, regretting the downfall of his hopes, and kept growing sadder and sadder, until the earliest sunbeam shone through the window, and gilded the ceiling over his head. It seemed to Midas that this bright yellow sunbeam was reflected in rather a strange way on the white covering of the bed. Looking more closely, what was his astonishment and delight when he found that this linen fabric had been changed to what seemed a woven texture of the purest, brightest gold! The Golden Touch had come to him with the first sunbeam!

Midas started up in a kind of joyful frenzy, and ran about

the room, grasping at everything that happened to be in his way. He seized one of the bed-posts, and it became immediately a fluted golden pillar. He pulled aside a window-curtain, in order to admit a clear spectacle of the wonders which he was performing, and the tassel grew heavy in his hand—a mass of gold.

He took up a book from the table. At his first touch it took the appearance of such a splendidly-bound and gilt-edged volume as one often meets with nowadays; but, on running his fingers through the leaves, behold, it was a bundle of thin golden plates, in which all the wisdom of the book had grown illegible. He quickly put on his clothes, and was overjoyed to see himself in a magnificent suit of gold cloth, which kept its flexibility and softness, although it burdened him a little with its weight. He drew out his handkerchief, which little Marygold had hemmed for him. That was likewise gold, with the dear child's neat and pretty stitches running along the border in gold thread!

Somehow or other, this last change did not quite please King Midas. He would rather that his little daughter's handiwork should have remained just the same as when she climbed his knee and put it into his hand.

But it was not worth while to vex himself about a trifle. Midas now took his spectacles from his pocket, and put them on his nose, in order that he might see more distinctly what he was about. In those days spectacles for common people had not been invented, but were already worn by kings; else, how could Midas have had any? To his great perplexity, however, excellent as the glasses were, he discovered that he could not possibly see through them. But this was the most natural thing in the world; for, on taking them off, the transparent crystal turned out to be plates of yellow metal, and, of course, were worthless as spectacles, though valuable as gold. It struck Midas as rather a pity that, with all his wealth, he could never again be rich enough to own a pair of serviceable spectacles.

• "It is no great matter," said he to himself. "We cannot expect any great good without having with it some small drawback. The Golden Touch is worth the sacrifice of a pair of spectacles, at least, if not of one's very eyesight. My own eyes will serve for ordinary purposes, and little Marygold will soon be old enough to read to me."

Wise King Midas was so exalted by his good fortune that the palace seemed not sufficiently large to contain him. He therefore went downstairs, and smiled when he saw that the balustrade of the staircase became a bar of burnished gold as his hand passed over it. He lifted the door-latch (it was brass only a moment ago, but golden when his fingers quitted it), and stepped into the garden. Here, as it happened, he found a great number of beautiful roses in full bloom and others in all the stages of lovely bud and blossom. Very sweet was their fragrance in the morning breeze. Their delicate blush was one of the fairest sights in the world, so gentle, so modest, and so full of sweet peace did these roses seem to be.

But Midas knew a way to make them far more precious, according to his way of thinking, than roses had ever been before. So he took great pains in going from bush to bush, and exercised his magic touch with great diligence, until every flower and bud, and even the worms at the heart of some of them, were changed to gold. By the time this good work was completed King Midas was called to breakfast, and, as the morning air had given him an excellent appetite, he made haste back to the palace.

IV.

What was usually a king's breakfast in the days of Midas I really do not know, and cannot stop now to find out. To the best of my belief, however, on this particular morning, the breakfast consisted of hot cakes, some nice little brook trout, roasted potatoes, fresh-boiled eggs and coffee for King Midas himself, and a bowl of bread and milk for his

daughter Marygold. At all events, this is a breakfast fit to set before a king; and, whether he had it or not, King Midas could not have had a better.

Little Marygold had not yet made her appearance. Her father ordered her to be called, and, seating himself at table, awaited the child's coming, in order to begin his own breakfast. To do Midas justice, he really loved his daughter, and loved her so much the more this morning on account of the good fortune which had befallen him.

It was not a great while before he heard her coming along the passage, crying bitterly. This surprised him, because Marygold was one of the most cheerful little people whom you could see in a summer's day, and hardly shed a thimbleful of tears in a twelvemonth. When Midas heard her sobs, he determined to put little Marygold into better spirits by an agreeable surprise, so, leaning across the table, he touched his daughter's bowl (which was a china one with pretty figures all around it), and changed it to gleaming gold.

Meanwhile Marygold slowly opened the door, and showed herself with her apron at her eyes, still sobbing as if her heart would break.

"How now, my little lady!" cried Midas. "Pray what is the matter with you this bright morning?"

Marygold, without taking the apron from her eyes, held out her hand, in which was one of the roses which Midas had so recently changed.

"Beautiful!" exclaimed her father. "And what is there in this magnificent golden rose to make you cry?"

"Ah, dear father!" answered the child as well as her sobs would let her, "it is not beautiful, but the ugliest flower that ever grew! As soon as I was dressed I ran into the garden to gather some roses for you, because I know you like them, and like them the better when gathered by your little daughter. But, oh dear, dear me! what do you think has happened? Such a misfortune! All the

beautiful roses, that smelt so sweet and had so many lovely blushes, are blighted and spoilt! They are grown quite yellow, as you see this one, and have no longer any sweet smell. What can have been the matter with them?"

"Pooh! my dear little girl, pray don't cry about it!" said Midas, who was ashamed to confess that he himself had wrought the change which so greatly troubled her. "Sit down and eat your bread and milk. You will find it easy enough to exchange a golden rose like that (which will last hundreds of years) for an ordinary one which would wither in a day."

"I don't care for such roses as this!" cried Marygold, tossing it away. "It has no smell, and the hard petals prick my nose!"

The child now sat down to table, but was so occupied with her grief for the blighted roses that she did not even notice the wonderful change in her china bowl. Perhaps this was all the better, for Marygold was accustomed to take pleasure in looking at the queer figures and strange trees and houses that were painted on the bowl, and these ornaments were now entirely lost in the yellow hue of the metal.

Midas meanwhile had poured out a cup of coffee, and, as a matter of course, the coffee-pot, whatever metal it may have been when he took it up, was gold when he set it down. He thought to himself that it was rather extravagant in a King of his simple habits to breakfast off a service of gold, and began to be puzzled with the difficulty of keeping his treasures safe. The cupboard and the kitchen would no longer be a secure place for articles so valuable as golden bowls and coffee-pots.

Amid these thoughts he lifted a spoonful of coffee to his lips, and, sipping it, was astonished to find that the instant his lips touched the liquid it became molten gold, and the next moment hardened into a lump!

"Ha!" exclaimed Midas, rather aghast.

"What is the matter, father?" asked little Marygold, gazing at him with the tears still standing in her eyes.

"Nothing, child—nothing!" said Midas. "Eat your bread and milk before it gets quite cold."

He took one of the nice little trout on his plate, and, by way of experiment, touched its tail with his finger. To his horror, it was immediately changed from a nicely-fried brook trout into a gold fish, though not one of those gold fishes which people often keep in glass globes as ornaments for the parlour. No; but it was really a metallic fish, and looked as if it had been very cunningly made by the nicest goldsmith in the world. Its little bones were now golden wires; its fins and tail were thin plates of gold; and there were the marks of the fork in it, and all the delicate, frothy appearance of a nicely-fried fish, exactly imitated in metal. A very pretty piece of work, as you may suppose; only King Midas, just at that moment, would much rather have had a real trout in his dish.

"I don't quite see," thought he to himself, "how I am to get any breakfast."

He took one of the smoking hot cakes, and had scarcely broken it when, though a moment before it had been of the finest wheat, it assumed the yellow hue of Indian meal. To say the truth, if it had been a hot Indian cake, Midas would have prized it a good deal more than he now did, when its hardness and greater weight made him only too sure that it was gold. Almost in despair, he helped himself to a boiled egg, which immediately underwent a change similar to those of the trout and the cake. The egg, indeed, might have been mistaken for one of those which the famous goose in the story-book was in the habit of laying; but King Midas was the only goose that had anything to do with the matter.

V.

"Well, this is a quandary!" thought he, leaning back in his chair and looking quite enviously at little Marygold, who

was now eating her bread and milk with great enjoyment. "Such a costly breakfast before me, and nothing that can be eaten!"

Hoping that, by being very quick, he might avoid turning his food to gold, King Midas next snatched a hot potato, and attempted to cram it into his mouth and swallow it in a hurry. But the Golden Touch was too nimble for him. He found his mouth full, not of mealy potato, but of solid metal, which so burnt his tongue that he roared aloud, and, jumping up from the table, began to dance and stamp about the room, both with pain and fright.

"Father, dear father," cried little Marygold, who was a very loving child, "pray what is the matter? Have you burnt your mouth?"

"Ah, dear child," groaned Midas, "I don't know what is to become of your poor father!"

Our pretty Marygold sat a moment gazing at her father, and trying, with all the might of her little wits, to find out what was the matter with him. Then, with a sweet and sorrowful impulse to comfort him, she started from her chair, and, running to Midas, threw her arms lovingly round his neck.

He bent down and kissed her. He felt that his little daughter's love was worth a thousand times more than he had gained by the Golden Touch.

"My precious, precious Marygold!" cried he.

But Marygold made no answer.

Alas! what had he done? How fatal was the gift which the stranger gave! The moment the lips of Midas touched Marygold's forehead a change had taken place. Her sweet, rosy face, so full of affection as it had been, assumed a glittering yellow colour, with yellow tear-drops hardening on her cheeks. Her beautiful brown ringlets took the same tint. Her soft and tender little form grew hard and inflexible within her father's encircling arms. Oh, terrible misfortune! The victim of his mad desire for wealth, little

Marygold was a human child no longer, but a golden statue!

Yes, there she was, with the questioning look of love, grief, and pity hardened into her face. It was the prettiest and most woeful sight that ever mortal saw. All the features and tokens of Marygold were there; even the beloved little dimple remained in her golden chin.

But the more perfect was the likeness, the greater was the father's agony at beholding this golden image, which was all that was left him of a daughter. It had been a favourite saying of Midas, whenever he felt particularly fond of the child, to say that she was worth her weight in gold. Now the saying had become only too true. And now at last, when it was too late, he felt how infinitely a warm and tender heart that loved him exceeded in value all the wealth that could be piled up betwixt the earth and sky!

It would be too sad a story if I were to tell you how Midas began to wring his hands and bemoan himself, and how he could neither bear to look at Marygold nor yet to look away from her. So he had only to wring his hands and to wish that he were the poorest man in the wide world, if the loss of all his wealth might bring back the faintest rose-colour to his dear child's face.

While he was in this tumult of despair, he suddenly beheld a stranger standing near the door. Midas bent down his head without speaking, for he recognised the same figure which had given him this wretched power of the Golden Touch. The stranger's countenance still wore a smile, which seemed to shed a yellow lustre all about the room, and gleamed on little Marygold's image, and on the other objects that had been changed by the touch of Midas.

"Well, friend Midas," said the stranger, "pray how do you succeed with the Golden Touch?"

Midas shook his head.

"I am very miserable," said he.

"Very miserable, indeed!" cried the stranger. "And how happens that? Have you not everything that your heart desired?"

"Gold is not everything," answered Midas. "And I have lost all that my heart really cared for."

"Ah! So you have made a discovery since yesterday?" said the stranger. "Let us see, then. Which of these two things do you think is really worth the more—the gift of the Golden Touch or one cup of clear, cold water?"

"Oh, blessed water!" exclaimed Midas. "It will never moisten my parched throat again!"

"The Golden Touch," continued the stranger, "or a crust of bread?"

"A piece of bread," answered Midas, "is worth all the gold on earth!"

"The Golden Touch," asked the stranger, "or your own little Marygold, warm, soft, and loving, as she was an hour ago?"

"Oh, my child, my dear child!" cried poor Midas, wringing his hands. "I would not have given that one small dimple in her chin for the power of changing this whole big earth into a solid lump of gold!"

"You are wiser than you were, King Midas!" said the stranger, looking gravely at him. "Your own heart, I perceive, has not been entirely changed from flesh to gold. Tell me, now, do you desire to rid yourself of this Golden Touch?"

"It is hateful to me!" replied Midas.

A fly settled on his nose, but immediately fell to the floor; for it, too, had become gold. Midas shuddered.

"Go, then," said the stranger, "and plunge into the river that glides past the bottom of your garden. Take likewise a vase of the same water, and sprinkle it over anything that you may desire to change back again from gold into its former substance. If you do this, it may possibly repair the mischief which your greed has caused."

King Midas bowed low, and when he lifted his head the shining stranger had vanished.

VI.

You will easily believe that Midas lost no time in snatching up a great earthen pitcher (but, ah me! it was no longer earthen after he touched it), and hastening to the river-side. As he scampered along, and forced his way through the shrubbery, it was wonderful to see how the leaves turned yellow behind him, as if the autumn had been there, and nowhere else. On reaching the river's brink he plunged headlong in, without waiting so much as to pull off his shoes.

"Poof! poof! poof!" snorted King Midas, as his head emerged out of the water. "Well, this is really a refreshing bath, and I think it must have quite washed away the Golden Touch. And now for filling my pitcher!"

As he dipped the pitcher into the water it gladdened his very heart to see it change from gold into the same good, honest earthen vessel which it had been before he touched it. He was aware, also, of a change within himself. A cold, hard, and heavy weight seemed to have gone out of his bosom. No doubt his heart had been gradually changing itself into insensible metal, but had now softened back again into flesh. Seeing a violet that grew on the bank of the river, Midas touched it with his finger, and was overjoyed to find that the delicate flower retained its purple hue, instead of undergoing a yellow blight. The curse of the Golden Touch had, therefore, really been removed from him.

King Midas hastened back to the palace; and, I suppose, the servants knew not what to make of it when they saw their royal master so carefully bringing home an earthen pitcher of water. But that water, which was to undo all the mischief that his folly had wrought, was more precious to Midas than an ocean of molten gold could have been. The first thing he did, as you need hardly be told, was to

sprinkle it by handfuls over the golden figure of little Marygold.

No sooner did it fall on her than you would have laughed to see how the rosy colour came back to the dear child's cheek, and how she began to sneeze and sputter, and how astonished she was to find herself dripping wet, and her father still throwing more water over her!

"Pray do not, dear father!" cried she. "See how you have wet my nice frock, which I put on only this morning!"

For Marygold did not know that she had been a little golden statue, nor could she remember anything that had happened since the moment when she ran with outstretched arms to comfort poor King Midas.

Her father did not think it necessary to tell his beloved child how very foolish he had been, but contented himself with showing how much wiser he had now grown. For this purpose he led little Marygold into the garden, where he sprinkled all the remainder of the water over the rose-bushes, and above five thousand roses recovered their beautiful bloom.

There were two circumstances, however, which, as long as he lived, used to put King Midas in mind of the Golden Touch. One was that the sands of the river sparkled like gold, the other that little Marygold's hair had now a golden tinge, which he had never observed in it before she had been changed by the effect of his kiss. This change of hue was really an improvement, and made Marygold's hair richer than in her babyhood.

When King Midas had grown quite an old man, and used to trot Marygold's children on his knee, he was fond of telling them this wonderful story, pretty much as I have now told it to you. And then would he stroke their glossy ringlets, and tell them that their hair, likewise, had a rich shade of gold, which they had from their mother.

"And, to tell you the truth, my precious little folks," quoth King Midas, diligently trotting the children all the

while, "ever since that morning I have hated the very sight of all other gold, save this !"

From "The Wonder Book" by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

THE RAINBOW.

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky ;
So was it when my life began ;
So is it now I am a man,
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die.
The child is father of the man ;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

W. Wordsworth

I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD.

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vale and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils !
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle in the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay ;
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee ;
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company ;
I gazed, and gazed, but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

For oft when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude.
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

W. Wordsworth.

FIDELITY.

A BARKING sound the shepherd hears,
A cry as of a dog or fox ;
He halts and searches with his eyes
Among the scattered rocks ;
And now at distance can discern
A stirring in a brake of fern ;
And instantly a dog is seen,
Glancing through that covert green.

The dog is not of mountain breed,
Its motions, too, are wild and shy ;
With something, as the shepherd thinks,
Unusual in its cry ;
Nor is there anyone is sight
All round, in hollow or on height ;
Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear ;
What is the creature doing here ?

It was a cove, a huge recess,
That keeps till June December's snow ;
A lofty precipice in front,
A silent tarn below !
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
Remote from public road or dwelling,
Pathway, or cultivated land,
From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer ;
The crags repeat the raven's croak
In symphony austere ;

Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—
And mists that spread the flying shroud ;
And sunbeams ; and the sounding blast
That, if it could, would hurry past,
But that enormous barrier binds it fast.

Not free from boding thoughts a while
The shepherd stood ; then makes his way
Towards the dog, o'er rocks and stones,
As quickly as he may ;
Not far had gone before he found
A human skeleton on the ground ;
The appalled discoverer, with a sigh,
Looks round to learn the history.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks
The man had fallen—that place of fear !
At length upon the shepherd's mind
It breaks, and all is clear ;
He instantly recalled the name,
And who he was, and whence he came ;
Remembered, too, the very day
On which the traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake
This lamentable tale I tell !
A lasting monument of words
This wonder merits well.
The dog, which still was hovering nigh,
Repeating the same timid cry—
This dog had been through three months' space
A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that since the day
When this ill-fated traveller died,
The dog had watched about the spot,
Or by his master's side.
How nourished here through such long time,
He knows who gave that love sublime,
And gave that strength of feeling great
Above all human estimate.

W. Wordsworth.

HOW TROY WAS TAKEN.

"O set the sails, for Troy, for Troy is fallen,
And Helen cometh home;
O set the sails, and all the Phrygian winds
Breathe us across the foam!
O set the sails unto the golden West!
It is o'er, the bitter strife.
At last the father cometh to the son,
And the husband to the wife."

Stephen Phillips.

PARIS, the son of Priam, King of Troy, carried off to his father's royal city Helen, the wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta, his friend and host. To avenge this wrong and to rescue Helen, Menelaus and the rest of the chiefs of the Grecian states banded together and sailed for Troy. For ten years they laid siege to the strong-walled city, and during that time many deeds of valour were done by Greek and Trojan chieftains.

At last the Greeks grew weary of the tedious war, and resolved to end it if they could by a stratagem. With the help of the goddess Minerva they built a wooden horse of monstrous size, and within its hollow sides they hid a number of picked warriors armed and ready for the fray. Then they sailed away as if for home, but when they reached the remoter shore of the Isle of Tenedos, which lay within sight of Troy, they hid their ships from sight and waited the issue of their deeply-laid plot.

The Trojans, cooped within their walls so long, unbarred their gates and issued in a throng like swarming bees. In huge delight they saw the Grecian camp deserted, and visited the now empty tents of the departed heroes. With wondering eyes they gazed upon the great wooden horse, and one of them proposed that the ramparts of the city should be broken down in order to admit the fabric; but others, more cautious, said that it ought rather to be

destroyed either by fire or by being cast into the sea; at least, said one, they might bore the hollow sides of the monstrous beast and find out what was within.

Then there came running from the city one named Laocoon, followed by a numerous crowd. "O wretched countrymen," he cried, "what madness possesses you? Think you the Grecians are gone from your coasts? Are the wiles of Ulysses no better known to you? This hollow fabric either encloses a party of our foes or it is an engine raised above the town to overlook the walls, and then to batter them down. Some harm to us it is surely intended to accomplish, either by fraud or force. Trust not the Grecian gift nor admit the horse within our walls." As he finished speaking he flung his spear against the steed, and, hissing through the air, it pierced the yielding planks of jointed wood and stood trembling in the body of the monster. The sides returned a rattling sound, and groans came from within. But the Trojans marked them not, fated as they were to fall a prey to the Grecians.

Meanwhile the Trojan shepherds had brought before their King a Greek whom they had found and taken captive. The man stood unarmed and trembling, staring and rolling his haggard eyes around. "Alas!" he cried, "what fate awaits a wretched fugitive, scorned by his foes and forsaken by his friends?" So he spoke, and, speaking, sighed, and the passion of his Trojan captors changed to pity for his woes. They spoke words of cheer to him, and urged him to tell them who he was and whence he came.

The man's fears for a moment forsook him, and he said: "Whatever happens, my words shall be sincere. Greece is my country, Sinon is my name. Assuage your thirst of blood and strike the blow." Once more he trembled in all his limbs, and with faltering tongue he told his story.

"The Greeks, wearied with an unsuccessful war, resolved some time ago to raise the siege and leave the town, but the wintry seas and southern winds prevented them. More-



HELEN ON THE WALLS OF TROY.

(From an engraving of Lord Leighton's painting, by permission of Messrs.
H. Graves and Co.)

over, the signs of the heavens dismayed them—flaming meteors hung in the air and thunders rattled through a cloudless sky. With fearful hearts their leaders sought the gods, and were told that a human sacrifice was required of them if they wished for a safe return to their homes. The news soon spread among the people, and each with fear believed himself to be the one ordained to die.

"Calchas the soothsayer was consulted, and after much urging he unwillingly said that I was the man chosen by the angry gods for death. The others praised the sentence, and made ready to carry it out. But, having broken my bonds I fled and lay in hiding till they sailed away. And now what remains for me, wretched man that I am?"

The captive's story moved the Trojans with fresh pity. The King ordered his fetters to be unbound, and said to him: "Dismiss thy fears. Forget the Greeks. But tell me truly, was it for force or guile, or for some religious purpose, that the Grecians raised this monster?"

"Ye lamps of heaven," replied the captive, lifting high his hands, "and all ye powers on high, forgive me for revealing the purpose of my countrymen. It was to gain the favour of the goddess Minerva that we built this wondrous frame, making it too lofty to pass through your gates, lest the blessing it may bring from the goddess should not be ours, but yours. For if it be taken within the walls of Troy the Greeks will one day bow before the Trojans."

Then a strange and terrible thing happened which filled the breasts of the Trojans with dismay. Laocoon, the priest of Neptune, the sea-god, had offered on the shore an ox as a sacrifice, when, looking towards the sea, the people saw two serpents ranked abreast sweep towards them across the water, lifting their flaming crests on high. Soon they reached the shore, and quickly moved across the plain, brandishing their forked tongues and licking their hissing jaws, which spluttered flame.

* The crowd fled amazed, and the monsters moved towards Laocoon and his children. Quickly they wound themselves round the tender bodies of the boys, and then the father, running to their help, was likewise encircled by their loathsome bodies, and with his children crushed to death. Their work completed, the serpents moved towards the wooden horse and reclined at its feet, having wreaked the vengeance of the goddess on the man who dared to fling his spear at her sacred tower.

Then the people demanded that the horse should be brought within the city walls, and that offerings should be made to the offended goddess. At once a spacious breach was made in the rampart; some brought levers, others wheels for fitting to the horse's feet, others hauled the unwieldy beast along with ropes, and at length by united efforts it was brought within the wall. Boys crowned with chaplets and bands of maidens danced around, while the monster was dragged through the breach and well within the city's bounds, and so great was the zeal and excitement of the people that not even the clashing sounds of armour and groans of men which came from within were marked by them.

The rejoicings lasted throughout the day, and when night had fallen the Trojans, now secure from foes, laid themselves down to rest, setting no guards and keeping no watch. Meanwhile the Greeks once more embarked, sailed back from Tenedos, and sought again the Trojan shores. Then Sinon the deceiver unlocked the side of the wooden horse and released the Grecian warriors, joyful to find their long confinement ended. They quickly slid down the cable to the ground, among them the injured Menelaus and Ulysses, the crafty ruler of Ithaca—

"A mighty spearsman and a seaman wise,
A hunter, and at need a lord of lies."

The rest is soon told. The gates were opened to the

waiting Greeks, and the town, oppressed with sleep and wine, surprised and taken. So

"Ruined Troy became the Grecian's prey,
And Ilium's lofty towers in ashes lay."

Told from Dryden's Translation of Virgil's "Æneid," Book II.

THE CYCLOPS.

WHEN the great city of Troy was taken all the chiefs who had fought against it set sail for their homes. But there was wrath in heaven against them, for indeed they had borne themselves haughtily and cruelly in the day of their victory; therefore they did not all find a safe and happy return. For one was shipwrecked, and another was shamefully slain by his false wife in his palace, and others found all things at home troubled and changed, and were driven to seek new dwellings elsewhere; and some, whose wives and friends and people had been still true to them through those ten long years of absence, were driven far and wide about the world before they saw their native land again. And of all, the wise Ulysses was he who wandered farthest and suffered most.

He was well-nigh the last to sail, for he had tarried many days to do pleasure to Agamemnon, lord of all the Greeks. Twelve ships he had with him—twelve he had brought to Troy—and in each there were some fifty men, being scarce half of those that had sailed in them in the old days, so many valiant heroes slept the last sleep by Simois and Scamander, and in the plain and on the sea-shore, slain in battle or by the shafts of Apollo.

First they sailed north-west to the Thracian coast, where the Ciconians dwelt, who had helped the men of Troy. Their city they took, and in it much plunder, slaves and oxen, and jars of fragrant wine, and might have escaped unhurt, but that they stayed to hold revel on the shore.

For the Ciconians gathered their neighbours, being men of the same blood, and did battle with the invaders, and drove them to their ships. And when Ulysses numbered his men he found that he had lost six out of each ship.

Scarce had he set out again when the wind began to blow fiercely; so, seeing a smooth, sandy beach, they drove the ships ashore and dragged them out of reach of the waves, and waited till the storm should abate. And the third morning being fair, they sailed again, and journeyed prosperously till they came to the very end of the great Peloponnesian land, where Cape Malea looks out upon the southern sea. But contrary currents baffled them, so that they could not round it, and the north wind blew so strongly that they must fain drive before it. And on the tenth day they came to the land where the lotus grows—a wondrous fruit, of which whosoever eats cares not to see country or wife or children again. Now the Lotus-eaters—for so they called the people of the land—were a kindly folk, and gave of the fruit to some of the sailors, not meaning them any harm, but thinking it to be the best that they had to give. These, when they had eaten, said that they would not sail any more over the sea, which, when the wise Ulysses heard, he bade their comrades bind them and carry them, sadly complaining, to the ships.

Then, the wind having abated, they took to their oars, and rowed for many days till they came to the country where the Cyclopes dwell. Now, a mile or so from the shore there was an island, very fair and fertile, but no man dwells there or tills the soil, and in the island a harbour where a ship may be safe from all winds, and at the head of the harbour a stream falling from a rock, and whispering alders all about it. Into this the ships passed safely, and were hauled up on the beach, and the crews slept by them, waiting for the morning. And the next day they hunted the wild goats, of which there was great store on the island, and feasted right merrily on what they caught, with draughts of

red wine which they had carried off from the town of the Ciconians.

But on the morrow Ulysses—for he was ever fond of adventure, and would know of every land to which he came what manner of men they were that dwelt there—took one of his twelve ships and bade row to the land. There was a great hill sloping to the shore, and there rose up here and there a smoke from the caves where the Cyclopes dwelt apart, holding no converse with each other, for they were a rude and savage folk, but ruled each his own household, not caring for others. Now, very close to the shore was one of these caves, very huge and deep, with laurels round about the mouth, and in front a fold with walls built of rough stone, and shaded by tall oaks and pines. So Ulysses chose out of the crew the twelve bravest, and bade the rest guard the ship, and went to see what manner of dwelling this was and who abode there. He had his sword by his side, and on his shoulder a mighty skin of wine, sweet-smelling and strong, with which he might win the heart of some fierce savages should he chance to meet with such, as indeed his prudent heart forecasted that he might.

So they entered the cave, and judged that it was the dwelling of some rich and skilful shepherd; for within there were pens for the young of the sheep and of the goats, divided all according to their age, and there were baskets full of cheeses, and full milk-pails ranged along the wall. But the Cyclops himself was away in the pastures. Then the companions of Ulysses besought him that he would depart, taking with him, if he would, a store of cheeses and sundry of the lambs and the kids. But he would not, for he wished to see, after his wont, what manner of host this strange shepherd might be. And truly he saw it to his cost.

It was evening when the Cyclops came home, a mighty giant, twenty feet in height, or more. On his shoulder he bore a vast bundle of pine-logs for his fire, and threw them down outside the cave with a great crash, and drove the

flocks within, and closed the entrance with a huge rock, which twenty waggons and more could not bear. Then he milked the ewes and all the she-goats, and half of the milk he curdled for cheese, and half he set ready for himself, when he should sup. Next he kindled a fire with the pine-logs, and the flame lighted up all the cave, showing him Ulysses and his comrades.

"Who are ye?" cried Polyphemus, for that was the giant's name. "Are ye traders, or, haply, pirates?"

For in those days it was not counted shame to be called a pirate.

Ulysses shuddered at the dreadful voice and shape, but bore him bravely, and answered: "We are no pirates, mighty sir, but Greeks sailing back from Troy, and subjects of the great King Agamemnon, whose fame is spread from one end of heaven to the other, and we are come to beg hospitality of thee in the name of Zeus, who rewards or punishes hosts and guests according as they be faithful the one to the other or no."

"Nay," said the giant, "it is but idle talk to tell me of Zeus and the other gods. We Cyclopes take no account of gods, holding ourselves to be much better and stronger than they. But come, tell me, where have you left your ship?"

But Ulysses saw his thought when he asked about the ship how he was minded to break it, and take from them all hope of flight, therefore he answered him craftily:

"Ship have we none, for that which was ours King Poseidon brake, driving it on a jutting rock on this coast, and we whom thou seest are all that are escaped from the waves."

Polyphemus answered nothing, but without more ado caught up two of the men, and devoured them. But the others, when they saw the dreadful deed, could only weep and pray to Zeus for help; and when the giant had ended his foul meal he lay down among his sheep and slept.

Then Ulysses questioned much in his heart whether he should slay the monster as he slept, for he doubted not that his good sword would pierce to the giant's heart, mighty as he was; but, being very wise, he remembered that, should he slay him, he and his comrades would yet perish miserably, for who should move away the great rock that lay against the door of the cave? So they waited till the morning, and the monster woke and milked his flocks, and afterwards, seizing two men, devoured them for his meal. Then he went to the pastures, but put the great rock on the mouth of the cave just as a man puts down the lid upon his quiver.

All that day the wise Ulysses was thinking what he might do best to save himself and his companions, and the end of his thinking was this: There was a mighty pole in the cave, green wood of an olive-tree, big as a ship's mast, which Polyphemus purposed to use when the smoke should have dried it as a walking-staff. Of this he cut off a fathom's length, and his comrades sharpened it and hardened it in the fire, and then hid it away. At evening the giant came back and drove his sheep into the cave, nor left the rams outside as he had been wont to do before, but shut them in. And having duly done his shepherd's work, he made his cruel feast as before. Then Ulysses came forward with the wine-skin in his hand, and said:

"Drink, Cyclops, now that thou hast feasted—drink, and see what precious things we had in our ship; but no one hereafter will come to thee with such like if thou dealest with strangers as cruelly as thou hast dealt with us."

Then the Cyclops drank and was mightily pleased, and said: "Give me again to drink, and tell me thy name, stranger, and I will give thee a gift such as a host should give. In good truth this is a rare liquor. We, too, have vines, but they bear not wine like this, which, indeed, must be such as the gods drink in heaven."

Then Ulysses gave him the cup again, and he drank.

Thrice he gave it to him, and thrice he drank, not knowing what it was and how it would work within his brain.

Then Ulysses spake to him: "Thou didst ask my name, Cyclops. Lo! my name is No Man. And now that thou knowest my name, thou shouldst give me thy gift."

And he said: "My gift shall be that I will eat thee last of all thy company."

And as he spoke he fell back in a drunken sleep. Then Ulysses bade his comrades be of good courage, for the time was come when they should be delivered. And they thrust the stake of olive-wood into the fire till it was ready, green as it was, to burst into flame, and they thrust it into the monster's eye, for he had but one eye, and that in the midst of his forehead, with the eyebrow below it. And Ulysses leant with all his force upon the stake, and thrust it in with might and main, and the burning wood hissed in the eye, just as the red-hot iron hisses in the water when a man seeks to temper steel for a sword.

Then the giant leapt up and tore away the stake and cried aloud, so that all the Cyclopes who dwelt on the mountain-side heard him and came about his cave, asking him: "What aileth thee, Polyphemus, that thou makest this uproar in the peaceful night, driving away sleep? Is anyone robbing thee of thy sheep, or seeking to slay thee by craft or force?"

And the giant answered: "No Man slays me by craft."

"Nay, but," they said, "if no man does thee wrong we cannot help thee. The sickness which great Zeus may send, who can avoid? Pray to our father Poseidon for help."

Then they departed, and Ulysses was glad at heart for the good success of his device when he said that he was No Man.

But the Cyclops rolled away the great stone from the door of the cave and sat in the midst, stretching out his hands to feel whether perchance the men within the cave would seek to go out among the sheep.

Long did Ulysses think how he and his comrades should best escape. At last he lighted upon a good device, and much he thanked Zeus for that this once the giant had driven the rams with the other sheep into the cave, for, these being great and strong, he fastened his comrades under the bodies of the beasts, tying them with osier twigs, of which the giant made his bed. One ram he took and fastened a man beneath it, and two others he set one on either side. So he did with the six, for but six were left out of the twelve who had ventured with him from the ship. And there was one mighty ram, far larger than all the others, and to this Ulysses clung, grasping the fleece tight with both his hands. So they waited for the morning. And when the morning came the rams rushed forth to the pasture; but the giant sat in the door and felt the back of each as it went by, nor thought to try what might be underneath. Last of all went the great ram. And the Cyclops knew him as he passed, and said:

"How is this, thou who art the leader of the flock? Thou art not wont thus to lag behind. Thou hast always been the first to run to the pastures and streams in the morning, and the first to come back to the fold when evening fell, and now thou art last of all. Perhaps thou art troubled about thy master's eye, which some wretch—No Man they call him—has destroyed, having first mastered me with wine. He has not escaped I ween. I would that thou couldst speak and tell me where he is lurking. Of a truth I would dash out his brains upon the ground and avenge me of this No Man."

So speaking, he let him pass out of the cave. But when they were out of reach of the giant Ulysses loosed his hold of the ram, and then unbound his comrades, and they hastened to their ship, not forgetting to drive before them a good store of the Cyclops' fat sheep. Right glad were those that had abode by the ship to see them. Nor did they lament for those that had died, though they were fain to do

so, for Ulysses forbade, fearing lest the noise of their weeping should betray them to the giant where they were. Then they all climbed into the ship, and, sitting well in order on the benches, smote the sea with their oars, laying-to right lustily that they might the sooner get away from the accursed land. And when they had rowed a hundred yards or so, so that a man's voice could yet be heard by one who stood upon the shore, Ulysses stood up in the ship and shouted :

"He was no coward, O Cyclops, whose comrades thou didst so foully slay in thy den. Justly art thou punished, monster, that devourest thy guests in thy dwelling. May the gods make thee suffer yet worse things than these !"

Then the Cyclops, in his wrath, broke off the top of a great hill, a mighty rock, and hurled it where he had heard the voice. Right in front of the ship's bow it fell, and a great wave rose as it sank, and washed the ship back to the shore. But Ulysses seized a long pole with both hands and pushed the ship from the land, and bade his comrades ply their oars, nodding with his head, for he was too wise to speak, lest the Cyclops should know where they were. Then they rowed with all their might and main.

And when they had gotten twice as far as before, Ulysses made as if he would speak again ; but his comrades sought to hinder him, saying :

"Nay, my lord, anger not the giant any more. Surely we thought before we were lost when he threw the great rock and washed our ship back to the shore. And if he hear thee now he may crush our ship and us, for the man throws a mighty bolt, and throws it far."

But Ulysses would not be persuaded, but stood up and said : "Hear, Cyclops ! If any man ask who blinded thee, say that it was the warrior Ulysses, son of Laertes, dwelling in Ithaca."

And the Cyclops answered with a groan : "Of a truth, the old oracles are fulfilled, for long ago there came to

this land one Telemus, a prophet, and dwelt among us even to old age. This man foretold to me that one Ulysses would rob me of my sight. But I looked for a great man and strong, who should subdue me by force, and now a weakling has done the deed, having cheated me with wine. But come thou hither, Ulysses, and I will be a host indeed to thee. Or, at least, may Poseidon give thee such a voyage to thy home as I would wish thee to have; for know that Poseidon is my sire. May be that he may heal me of my grievous wound."

And Ulysses said: "Would to God I could send thee down to the abode of the dead, where thou wouldst be past all healing, even from Poseidon's self!"

Then the Cyclops lifted up his hands to Poseidon, and prayed:

"Hear me, Poseidon, if I am indeed thy son and thou my father. May this Ulysses never reach his home! Or, if the fates have ordered that he should reach it, may he come alone, all his comrades lost, and come to find sore trouble in his house!"

And as he ended he hurled another mighty rock, which almost lighted on the rudder's end, yet missed it as by a hair's breadth. So Ulysses and his comrades escaped, and came to the island of the wild goats, where they found their comrades, who, indeed, had waited long for them in sore fear lest they had perished. Then Ulysses divided among his company all the sheep which they had taken from the Cyclops. And all, with one consent, gave him for his share the great ram which had carried him out of the cave, and he sacrificed it to Zeus. And all that day they feasted right merrily on the flesh of sheep and on sweet wine, and when the night was come they lay down upon the shore and slept.

From "Stories from Homer," by A. J. Church.

THE BED OF PROCRUSTES.

As Theseus* was skirting the Vale of Cephissus, along the foot of lofty Parnes, a very tall and strong man came down to meet him, dressed in rich garments. On his arms were golden bracelets, and round his neck a collar of jewels; and he came forward, bowing courteously, and held out both his hands, and spoke:

"Welcome, fair youth, to these mountains; happy am I to have met you! For what greater pleasure to a good man than to entertain strangers? But I see that you are weary. Come up to my castle and rest yourself awhile."

"I give you thanks," said Theseus; "but I am in haste to go up the valley and to reach Aphidnai, in the Vale of Cephissus."

"Alas! you have wandered far from the right way, and you cannot reach Aphidnai to-night, for there are many miles of mountain between you and it, and steep passes, and cliffs dangerous after nightfall. It is well for you that I met you, for my whole joy is to find strangers, and to feast them at my castle, and hear tales from them of foreign lands. Come up with me and eat the best of venison, and drink the rich red wine, and sleep upon my famous bed, of which all travellers say that they never saw the like; for whatsoever the stature of my guest, however tall or short, that bed fits him to a hair, and he sleeps on it as he never slept before."

Theseus wished to go forwards; but he was ashamed to seem churlish to so hospitable a man, and he was curious to see that wondrous bed, yet he shrank from the man—he knew not why—for, though his voice was gentle and fawning, it was dry and husky, like a toad's, and though his

* Another famous hero of ancient Greece.

eyes were gentle they were dull and cold like stones. But he consented, and went with the man up a glen which led from the road toward the peaks of Parnes, under the dark shadow of the cliffs.

And as they went up the glen grew narrower, and the cliffs higher and darker, and beneath them a torrent roared, half seen between bare limestone crags. And around them was neither tree nor bush, while from the white peaks of Parnes the snow-blasts swept down the glen, cutting and chilling, till a horror fell on Theseus as he looked round at that doleful place. And he asked at last :

"Your castle stands, it seems, in a dreary region."

"Yes; but once within it, hospitality makes all things cheerful. But who are these?" And he looked back, and Theseus also; and far below, along the road which they had left, came a string of laden asses, and merchants walking by them, watching their ware.

"Ah, poor souls!" said the stranger. "Well for them that I looked back and saw them! And well for me, too, for I shall have the more guests at my feast. Wait awhile till I go down and call them, and we will eat and drink together the livelong night. Happy am I, to whom Heaven sends so many guests at once."

And he ran back down the hill, waving his hand and shouting to the merchants, while Theseus went slowly up the steep pass.

But as he went up he met an aged man, who had been gathering driftwood in the torrent-bed. He had laid down his faggot in the road, and was trying to lift it again to his shoulder. And when he saw Theseus he called to him and said :

"O fair youth, help me with my burden, for my limbs are stiff and weak with years."

Then Theseus lifted the burden on his back. And the old man blessed him, and then looked earnestly upon him, and said :

"Who are you, fair youth, and wherefore travel you this doleful road?"

"Who I am my parents know; but I travel this doleful road because I have been invited by a hospitable man, who promises to feast me and to make me sleep upon I know not what wondrous bed."

Then the old man clapped his hands together and cried:

"O house of Hades, man-devouring! will thy maw never be full? Know, fair youth, that you are going to torment and to death, for he who met you (I will requite your kindness by another) is a robber and a murderer of men. Whatsoever stranger he meets he entices him hither to death; and, as for this bed of which he speaks, truly it fits all comers, yet none ever rose alive off it save me."

"Why?" asked Theseus, astonished.

"Because, if a man be too tall for it, he lops his limbs till they be short enough; and, if he be too short, he stretches his limbs till they be long enough; but me only he spared, seven weary years ago; for I alone of all fitted his bed exactly, so he spared me, and made me his slave. And once I was a wealthy merchant, and dwelt in brazen-gated Thebes; but now I hew wood and draw water for him, the torment of all mortal men!"

Then Theseus said nothing; but he ground his teeth together.

"Escape, then," said the old man, "for he will have no pity on thy youth. But yesterday he brought hither a young man and a maiden, and fitted them upon his bed; and the young man's hands and feet he cut off, but the maiden's limbs he stretched until she died, and so perished miserably; but I am tired of weeping over the slain. And therefore he is called Procrustes, the stretcher, though his father called him Damastes. Flee from him; yet whither will you flee? The cliffs are steep, and who can climb them? and there is no other road."

But Theseus laid his hand upon the old man's mouth,

and said, "There is no need to flee," and he turned to go down the pass.

"Do not tell him that I have warned you, or he will kill me by some evil death;" and the old man screamed after him down the glen; but Theseus strode on in his wrath.

And he said to himself: "This is an ill-ruled land. When shall I have done ridding it of monsters?" And, as he spoke, Procrustes came up the hill, and all the merchants with him, smiling and talking gaily. And when he saw Theseus he cried: "Ah, fair young guest, have I kept you too long waiting?"

But Theseus answered: "The man who stretches his guests upon a bed and hews off their hands and feet, what shall be done to him when right is done throughout the land?"

Then Procrustes' countenance changed, and his cheeks grew as green as a lizard, and he felt for his sword in haste; but Theseus leapt on him, and cried:

"Is this true, my host, or is it false?" and he clasped Procrustes round waist and elbow, so that he could not draw his sword. "Is this true, my host, or is it false?"

But Procrustes answered never a word.

Then Theseus flung him from him, and lifted up his dreadful club; and, before Procrustes could strike him, he had struck, and felled him to the ground.

And once again he struck him; and his evil soul fled forth, and went down to Hades squeaking like a bat into the darkness of a cave.

Then Theseus stripped him of his gold ornaments, and went up to his house, and found there great wealth and treasure, which he had stolen from the passers-by. And he called the people of the country, whom Procrustes had spoiled a long time, and parted the spoil among them, and went down the mountains and away.

From "The Heroes," by Charles Kingsley.

ECHO AND THE FERRY.

Ay, Oliver ! I was but seven, and he was eleven ;
He looked at me pouting and rosy. I blushed where I stood.
They had told us to play in the orchard (and I only seven !
A small guest at the farm) ; but he said, " Oh, a girl was no good !"
So he whistled and went, he went over the stile to the wood.
It was sad, it was sorrowful ! Only a girl—only seven !
At home in the dark London smoke I had not found it out.
The pear-trees looked on in their white, and blue birds flash'd
about,
And they too were angry as Oliver. Were they eleven ?
I thought so. Yes, everyone else was eleven—eleven !

So Oliver went, but the cowslips were tall at my feet,
And all the white orchard with fast-falling blossom was litter'd ;
And under and over the branches those little birds twitter'd,
While hanging head downwards they scolded because I was seven.
A pity. A very great pity. One should be eleven.
But soon I was happy, the smell of the world was so sweet,
And I saw a round hole in an apple-tree rosy and old.
Then I knew ! for I peeped and I felt it was right they should scold !
Eggs small and eggs many. For gladness I broke into laughter ;
And then some one else—oh, how softly !—came after, came after
With laughter—with laughter came after.

And no one was near us to utter that sweet mocking call,
That soon very tired sank low with a mystical fall.
But this was the country—perhaps it was close under heaven ;
Oh, nothing so likely ; the voice might have come from it even.
I knew about heaven. But this was the country, of this
Light, blossom, and piping, and flashing of wings not at all.
Not at all. No. But one little bird was an easy forgiver :
She peeped, she drew near as I moved from her domicile small,
Then flashed down her hole like a dart—like a dart from the quiver
And I waded atween the long grasses and felt it was bliss.

—So this was the country ; clear dazzle of azure and shiver
And whisper of leaves, and a humming all over the tall
White branches, a humming of bees. And I came to the wall—

A little low wall—and looked over, and there was the river,
The lane that led on to the village, and then the sweet river
Clear shining and slow, she had far, far to go from her snow ;
But each rush gleamed a sword in the sunlight to guard her long flow,
And she murrur'd, methought, with a speech very soft, very low.
"The ways will be long, but the days will be long," quoth the river,
"To me a long liver, long, long !" quoth the river—the river.

I dreamed of the country that night, of the orchard, the sky,
The voice that had mocked coming after and over and under.
But at last—in a day or two namely—Eleven and I
Were very fast friends, and to him I confided the wonder.
He said that was Echo. "Was Echo a wise kind of bee
That had learned how to laugh : could it laugh in one's ear and
then fly

And laugh again yonder?" "No ; Echo"—he whispered it low—
"Was a woman, they said, but a woman whom no one could see
And no one could find ; and he did not believe it, not he,
But he could not get near for the river that held us asunder.
Yet I that had money—a shilling, a whole silver shilling—
We might cross if I thought I would spend it." "Oh yes, I was
willing"—

And we ran hand in hand, we ran down to the ferry, the ferry,
And we heard how she mocked at the folk with a voice clear and
merry

When they called for the ferry ; but oh ! she was very—was very
Swift-footed. She spoke and was gone ; and when Oliver cried,
"Hie over ! hie over ! you man of the ferry—the ferry !"
By the still water's side she was heard far and wide—she replied
And she mocked in her voice sweet and merry, "You man of the
ferry,
You man of—you man of the ferry !"

"Hie over !" he shouted. The ferryman came at his calling,
Across the clear reed-bordered river he ferried us fast ;—
Such a chase ! Hand in hand, foot to foot, we ran on ; it surpass'd
All measure her doubling—so close, then so far away falling,
Then gone, and no more. Oh ! to see her but once unaware,
And the mouth that had mocked, but we might not (yet sure she
was there !),
Nor behold her wild eyes and her mystical countenance fair

We sought in the wood, and we found the wood-wren in her stead;
In the field, and we found but the cuckoo that talked overhead;
By the brook, and we found the reed-sparrow deep-nested, in
brown—

Not Echo, fair Echo ! for Echo, sweet Echo ! was flown.

So we came to the place where the dead people wait till God call.
The church was among them, gray moss over roof, over wall.
Very silent, so low. And we stood on a green grassy mound
And looked in at a window, for Echo, perhaps, in her round
Might have come in to hide there. But no; every oak-carven seat
Was empty. We saw the great Bible—old, old, very old,
And the parson's great Prayer-Book beside it; we heard the slow
beat

Of the pendulum swing in the tower; we saw the clear gold
Of a sunbeam float down to the aisle and then waver and play
On the low chancel step and the railing, and Oliver said,
"Look, Katie ! look, Katie ! when Lettice came here to be wed
She stood where that sunbeam drops down, and all white was her
gown ;

And she stepped upon flowers they strew'd for her." Then quoth
small Seven :

" Shall I wear a white gown and have flowers to walk upon ever ?"

All doubtful : " It takes a long time to grow up," quoth Eleven ;
" You're so little, you know, and the church is so old, it can never
Last on till you're tall." And in whispers—because it was old
And holy, and fraught with strange meanings, half felt, but not told,
Full of old parsons' prayers, who were dead, of old days, of old folk,
Neither heard nor beheld, but about us, in whispers we spoke.

Then we went from it softly and ran hand in hand to the strand,
While bleating of flocks and birds piping made sweeter the land,
And Echo came back e'en as Oliver drew to the ferry,

" O Katie !" " O Katie !" " Come on, then !" " Come on, then !"

" For, see,

The round sun, all red, lying low by the tree"—" by the tree,"

" By the tree." Ay, she mocked him again, with her voice sweet
and merry :

" Hie over !" " Hie over !" " You man of the ferry"—" the ferry."

" You man of the ferry—

You man of—you man of—the ferry."

Ay, here—it was here that we woke her, the Echo of old ;
 All life of that day seems an echo, and many times told.
 Shall I cross by the ferry to-morrow, and come in my white
 To that little low church? and will Oliver meet me anon?
 Will it all seem an echo from childhood pass'd over—pass'd on?
 Will the grave parson bless us? Hark, hark! in the dim failing
 light
 I hear her! As then the child's voice clear and high, sweet and
 merry
 Now she mocks the man's tone with "Hie over! Hie over the
 ferry!"
 "And Katie." "And Katie." "Art out with the glow-worms to-
 night.
 My Katie?" "My Katie!" For gladness I break into laughter
 And tears. Then it all comes again as from far-away years ;
 Again, some one else—oh, how softly!—with laughter comes after,
 Comes after—with laughter comes after.

Jean Ingelow.

THE ÆSIR OF THE NORSE VIKINGS.

I. THOR'S INVASION OF GIANT LAND.

So long as we call the fifth day of the week Thursday—
 that is, Thor's day—we shall remember one at least of the
 Æsir, or gods, in whom the old Norsemen as well as our
 Anglo-Saxon forefathers believed before they learnt to know
 and to love Him whom they named the White Christ.

The mightiest of the sons of Odin, the All-father, was
 Thor, the strongest of gods and men. His mansion was
 called Bilskirnir, in which were five hundred and forty halls.
 It was the largest house ever built.

Thor had a car drawn by two goats, and the noise of his
 chariot-wheels was the thunder of the heavens. He like-
 wise owned three very precious things. The first was a
 mallet called Mjolnir, which both the Frost Giants and the
 Mountain Giants, the enemies of the gods, knew to their

cost when they saw it hurled against them in the air; and no wonder, for it had split many a skull of their fathers and children. No matter how far Thor cast this weapon, it always returned to his hand. The second rare thing he possessed was called the girdle of strength; when he girded it about him his might was doubled. The third, also very precious, was a pair of iron gauntlets, which he was obliged to put on whenever he would lay hold of the handle of his mallet.

There was another god of the Norsemen, the contriver of all fraud and mischief and the disgrace of gods and men. His name was Loki, or Lok, and he was the son of a giant. He was handsome and well made, but of a very fickle mood and most evil disposition. He surpassed all beings in cunning and treachery.

One day Thor set out in his car drawn by two he-goats, and Lok with him, on a journey. Night coming on, they put up at a peasant's cottage, when Thor killed his goats, and, after flaying them, put them into the kettle. When the flesh was sodden he sat down with his fellow-traveller to supper, and invited the peasant and his family to partake of the meal. The peasant's son was named Thialfi and his daughter Roska. Thor bade them throw all the bones into the goats' skins, which were spread out near the fireplace, but Thialfi broke one of the leg-bones with his knife to come at the marrow.

Thor, having passed the night in the cottage, rose at the dawn of day, and when he was dressed took his mallet Mjolnir and, lifting it up, blessed the goats' skins, which he had no sooner done than the two goats sprang to life again, only that one of them now limped on one of its hind legs. Thor, seeing this, said that the peasant or one of his family had handled the leg-bone of this goat too roughly, for he saw clearly that it was broken.

It may readily be imagined how frightened the peasant was when he saw Thor knit his brows and grasp the handle

of his mallet with such force that the joints of his fingers became white from the exertion. Fearing to be struck down by the very looks of the god, the peasant and his family knelt to ask pardon, offering whatever they possessed as an atonement for the offence. Thor, seeing their fear, became gentler, and contented himself by demanding that Thialfi and Roska should become his attendants.

Leaving his goats with the peasant, Thor went eastward on the road to Giant Land, until he came to the shores of a vast and deep sea. This he passed over, and then made his way into a strange country with his three companions. They had not gone far ere they saw before them an immense forest, through which they wandered all day.

Thialfi was of all men the swiftest of foot. He bore Thor's wallet, but the forest was a bad place for finding anything eatable to stew in it. When it became dark they searched on all sides for a place where they might pass the night, and at last they came to a very large hall, with an entrance that took up the whole breadth of one of the ends of the building.

Here they chose them a place to sleep in, but towards midnight they were alarmed by an earthquake, which shook the whole building. Thor, rising up, called on his companions to seek with him a place of safety. On the right they found an adjoining chamber, into which they entered; but while the others, trembling with fear, crept into the farthest corner, Thor stood at the doorway with his mallet in his hand ready to defend himself whatever might happen.

A terrible groaning was heard during the night, and at dawn of day Thor went out and saw lying near a man of enormous bulk, who slept and snored loudly. Thor could now account for the noise they had heard overnight, and, girding on his Belt of Valour, doubled that strength of which he now stood in need. The giant, awakening, rose up, and it is said that for once in his life Thor was afraid

to make use of his mallet, and contented himself by simply asking the giant his name.

"My name is Skrymir; but I need not ask thy name, for I know that thou art Thor. But what hast thou done with my glove?" and, stretching out his hand, Skrymir picked up his glove, which Thor then saw was what they had taken overnight for a hall, the chamber where they had sought refuge being the thumb.

Skrymir then asked whether they would have his fellowship, and, Thor consenting, the giant opened his wallet and began to eat his breakfast. Thor and his companions having also taken their morning meal, though in another place, Skrymir proposed that they should lay their provisions together, to which Thor also agreed. The giant then put all the meat into one wallet, which he slung on his back, and went before them, taking tremendous strides the whole day, and at dusk sought out for them a place under a large oak-tree where they might pass the night. Skrymir then told them that he would lie down to sleep. "But take ye the wallet," he added, "and prepare your supper."

Skrymir soon fell asleep and began to snore strongly, but, strange though it may seem, it must be told that when Thor came to open the wallet he could not untie a single knot, nor render a single string looser than it was before.

Seeing that his labour was in vain Thor became wroth, and, grasping his mallet with both hands, while he took a step forward, flung it at the giant's head. Skrymir, awakening, merely asked whether a leaf had fallen on his head, and whether they had supped and were ready to go to sleep.

Thor answered that they were just going to sleep, and so saying went and laid himself down under another oak-tree. But sleep came not that night to Thor, and when he noticed that Skrymir snored again so loudly that the forest echoed with the sound, he arose, and, grasping his mallet, launched it with such force that it sank into the giant's skull up to the handle.

Skrymir, awakening, cried out: "What's the matter? Did an acorn fall on my head? How fares it with thee, Thor?"

But Thor went away, hastily saying that he had just then awakened, and that as it was only midnight there was still time to sleep. He, however, made up his mind that if he had an opportunity of striking a third blow it should settle all matters between them.

A little before daybreak he perceived that Skrymir was again fast asleep, and, grasping his mallet, dashed it with such violence that it forced its way into the giant's cheek up to the handle.

But Skrymir sat up, and, stroking his cheek, said: "Are there any birds perched on this tree? Methought when I awoke some moss from the branches fell on my head. What! art thou awake, Thor? Methinks it is time for us to get up and dress ourselves; but you have not now a long way before you to the city called Utgard. I have heard you whispering to one another that I am not a man of small dimensions, but if you come into Utgard you will see there many men much taller than myself. Wherefore I advise you, when you come there, not to make too much of yourselves, for the followers of Utgard-Loki will not abide the boastings of such mannikins as you are. The best thing you could do would be to turn your way back again eastward, for mine now lies northward to those rocks which you see in the distance."

Hereupon he threw his wallet over his shoulders and turned away from them into the forest, and it was never known that Thor wished to meet with him a second time.

II. BALDER DEAD.

The second son of Odin was Balder, who was so fair and dazzling that rays of light seemed to issue from him. Balder was the mildest, the wisest, and the most eloquent of all

the Æsir, and dwelt in the heavenly mansion called Bredablik, into which nothing unclean could enter.

At one time Balder the Good, having been tormented with terrible dreams, indicating that his life was in great danger, told them to the assembled Æsir, who resolved to conjure all things to ward off the danger that threatened.

Then Frigga, the wife of Odin, took an oath from fire and water, from iron, and all other metals, as well as from stones, earths, diseases, beasts, birds, poisons, and creeping things, that none of them would do any harm to Balder.

When this was done it became a favourite pastime of the Æsir at their meetings to get Balder to stand up and serve them as a mark, some hurling darts at him, some stones, while others hewed at him with their swords and battle-axes, for do they what they would none of them could harm him, and this was regarded by all as a great honour shown to Balder.

But when Lok beheld the scene he was sorely vexed that Balder was not hurt. Taking, therefore, the shape of a woman, he went to Fensalir, the mansion of Frigga. That goddess, when she saw the pretended woman, inquired of her if she knew what the Æsir were doing at their meetings. She replied that they were throwing darts and stones at Balder without being able to hurt him.

"Ay," said Frigga, "neither metal nor wood can hurt Balder, for I have exacted an oath from all of them."

"What!" exclaimed the woman, "have all things sworn to spare Balder?"

"All things," replied Frigga, "except one little shrub that grows on the eastern side of Valhalla, the abode of the gods, and is called Mistletoe. This I thought too young and feeble to crave an oath from."

As soon as Lok heard this he went to the place where the gods were assembled. There he found Hoder standing apart without partaking of the sports, on account of his blindness, and going up to him, said:

"Why dost thou not also throw something at Balder?"

"Because I am blind," answered Hoder, "and see not where Balder is, and have, moreover, nothing to throw with."

"Come then," said Lok; "do like the rest, and show honour to Balder by throwing this twig at him, and I will direct thy arm toward the place where he stands."

Hoder then took the mistletoe, and under the guidance of Lok darted it at Balder, who, pierced through and through, fell down lifeless. Surely never was there witnessed a more atrocious deed than this! When Balder fell the Æsir were struck speechless with horror, and then they looked at each other; all were of one mind to lay hands on him who had done the deed, but they were obliged to delay their vengeance out of respect for the sacred place in which they were assembled.

They at length gave vent to their grief by loud cries, though not one of them could find words to express to the full his feelings. When the gods came to themselves Frigga asked who among them wished to gain all her love and goodwill. "For this," said she, "shall he have who will ride to the under-world and try to find Balder and offer Hela a ransom if she will let him return to us."

Thereupon Hermod, surnamed the Nimble, the son of Odin, offered to go. Odin's horse, Sleipner, was then led forth, on which Hermod mounted, and galloped away on his mission.

The Æsir then took the dead body and bore it to the sea-shore, where stood Balder's ship *Hringhorn*, which passed for the largest in the world. But when they wanted to launch it in order to make Balder's funeral pile on it they were unable to make it stir. So they sent to Giant Land for a giantess named Hyrrokin, who came mounted on a wolf having twisted serpents for a bridle.

As soon as she alighted Odin ordered four Berserkers to hold her steed fast; they were, however, obliged to throw

the animal on the ground ere they could effect their purpose. Hyrrokin then went to the ship, and, with a single push, set it afloat, but the motion was so violent that fire sparkled from the rollers and the earth shook all around. Thor, enraged at the sight, grasped his mallet, and, but for the Æsir, would have broken the woman's skull.

Balder's body was then borne to the funeral pile on board the ship, and this ceremony had such an effect on Nanna, his wife, that her heart broke with grief, and her body was burnt on the same pile with her husband's. Thor stood up and blessed the pile with Mjolnir, and during the ceremony kicked a dwarf named Litur, who was running before his feet into the fire.

There was a vast concourse at Balder's funeral. First came Odin with Frigga and his ravens; then Frey, in his car drawn by a boar named Slidrugtanni; Heimdall rode his horse called Gulltop, and Freyja drove in her chariot drawn by cats. There were also a great many Frost Giants and Mountain Giants present. Odin laid on the pile the gold ring called Draupnir, which afterwards acquired the power of producing every ninth night eight rings of equal weight. Balder's horse was led to the pile, and consumed in the same flames on the body of his master.

Meanwhile, Hermod was proceeding on his mission. For the space of nine days and as many nights he rode through deep glens, so dark that he could not see anything until he arrived at the river Gioll, which he passed over on a bridge covered with glittering gold. Modguder, the maiden who kept the bridge, asked him his name and lineage, telling him that the day before five bands of travellers bound for the under-world had ridden over the bridge and did not shake it so much as he alone. "But," she added, "thou hast not death's hue on thee, why then ridest thou here on the way to the under-world?"

"I ride," answered Hermod, "to seek Balder. Hast thou perchance seen him pass this way?"

"Balder," she replied, "hath ridden over Gioll's bridge; but there below, towards the north, lies the way to the abodes of the departed."

Hermod then pursued his journey until he came to the barred gates of the under-world. Here he alighted, girthed his saddle tighter, and, remounting, clapped both spurs to his horse, who cleared the gate by a tremendous leap without touching it. Hermod then rode on to the palace, where he found his brother Balder occupying the most lofty seat in the hall, and passed the night in his company. The next morning he besought Hela to let Balder ride home with him, assuring her that nothing but lamentations were to be heard among the Æsir. Hela answered that it should now be tried whether Balder was so beloved as he was said to be.

"If, therefore," she added, "all things in the world, both living and lifeless, weep for him, then shall he return to the Æsir; but if any one thing speak against him or refuse to weep, he shall be kept here."

Hermod then rose, and Balder led him out of the hall and gave him the ring Draupnir, to present as a keepsake to Odin. Nanna also sent Frigga a linen cassock and other gifts, and to Fulla a gold finger-ring. Hermod then rode back and gave an account of all he had heard and witnessed.

The gods upon this despatched messengers throughout the world, to beg everything to weep, in order that Balder might be delivered from Hela. All things very willingly did so, both men and every other living being, as well as earth and stones, and trees and metals, just as you must have seen those things weep when they are brought from a cold place into a hot one.

As the messengers were returning, feeling their mission had been quite successful, they found an old hag named Thaukt sitting in a cavern, and begged her to weep for Balder. But she answered:

"Thaukt will wail
With arid tears
Balder's bale fire.
Nought, quick or dead,
By man's son gain I,
Let Hela hold what's hers."

It was strongly suspected that this hag was no other than Lok himself, who never ceased to work evil among the Æsir.

III. THE FLIGHT AND PUNISHMENT OF LOK.

Evil were the deeds of Lok, truly; first of all, in his having caused Balder to be slain, and then preventing him from being delivered out of the under-world. But he was punished for these crimes, and in such a manner that he will long repent having committed them.

When he saw how angry the gods were he fled and hid himself in the mountains. There he built him a dwelling with four doors, so that he could see everything that passed around him. Often in the daytime he took the likeness of a salmon, and hid himself under the waters of a cascade, where he employed himself in finding out and spoiling whatever plans the Æsir might have recourse to in order to catch him.

One day, as he sat in his dwelling, he took flax and yarn and worked them into meshes, in the manner that nets have since been made by fishermen. Odin, however, had found out his retreat, and Lok, becoming aware that the Æsir were approaching, threw his net into the fire and ran to conceal himself in the river.

When the gods entered the house, Kvasir, who was the most distinguished among them all for his quickness, traced out in the hot embers the remains of the net which had been burnt, and told Odin that it must be an invention to catch fish. Whereupon they set to work and wove a net after the model they saw imprinted in the ashes. This net, when

finished, they threw into the river in which Lok had hidden himself.

Thor held one end of the net, and all the others laid hold of the other end, thus jointly drawing it along the stream. Notwithstanding all their care, the net passed over Lok, who had crept between two stones, and the gods only perceived that some living thing had touched the meshes. They therefore cast their net a second time, hanging so great a weight to it that it everywhere raked the bed of the river. But Lok, perceiving that he had but a short distance to go to the sea, swam onwards and leapt over the net into the waterfall.

The Æsir instantly followed him, and divided themselves into two bands. Thor, wading along in mid-stream, followed the net, whilst the others dragged it along towards the sea. Lok then saw that he had only two chances of escape—either to swim out to sea or to leap again over the net. He chose the latter; but as he took a great leap Thor caught him in his hand. Being, however, extremely slippery, he would have escaped had not Thor held him fast by the tail, and this is the reason why salmon have had their tails ever since so fine and thin.

The gods having thus captured Lok, dragged him without pity into a cavern, wherein they placed three sharp-pointed rocks, boring a hole through each of them. Having also seized Lok's children, Vali and Nari, they changed the former into a wolf, and in this likeness he tore his brother to pieces. The gods then made cords, with which they bound Lok on the point of the rocks, and afterwards changed these cords into thongs of iron. Skadi then suspended a serpent over him in such a manner that the venom should fall on his face drop by drop. But Siguna, his wife, stands by him and receives the drops as they fall in a cup, which she empties as often as it is filled. But while she is doing this venom falls upon Lok, which makes him howl with horror, and twist his body about so violently that

the whole earth shakes, and this produces what men call earthquakes. There will Lok lie until the Twilight of the Gods.

THE VICTORIOUS DEATH OF BEOWULF.

I.

BEOWULF, the heroic warrior, the slayer of Grendel and of that monster's mother the hideous witch-woman, ruled as King in the land of the Goths. For fifty years he reigned, and his people dwelt in peace.

Then there came a dragon, a fiery monster, that wasted the lands of Beowulf. It dwelt in a barrow on a wide, open fell; and it guarded a treasure both rich and rare.

Three hundred years before the last of a band of heroes had hid in the barrow his hoard of riches. Then death had conquered him; the treasure was left unguarded. Ranging the land in search of prey, the dragon had found the hoard, and had made his dwelling in the mound.

A fugitive, fleeing the wrath of his master, one day found the dragon asleep, his scaly form encircling the barrow. With trembling foot and loudly-beating heart he stepped within the treasure-house; he took from thence a precious tankard, and bore it to his lord as an offering of peace.

The dragon awoke and knew of his loss. One of the race of men whom he had hitherto left in peace had spoiled his treasure-house. Henceforth he would war against that race, leaving fire and death in his track. So the trouble began; the land of Beowulf felt the anger of the dragon, the flaming one that flieth by night, the bane of peaceful tillers of the soil.

Soon the Worm reached the palace of the King; the pride of the Goths was devoured by flames of fire. Then the leader of warriors, the captain of heroes, was angered

at heart. He himself would fight with the dragon—he who had passed through many a conflict, had won victory in many a desperate fight. So should his people rest once more in peace.

II.

Against the fiery flame the linden shield would avail not. Therefore the King had made for him a shield of iron—a sure defence in war, a cunning masterpiece of smith's work.

In this and in his own stout heart he trusted; he scorned to seek the monster with a warrior host; he would venture forth, not alone indeed, but leading only a small band of his faithful Goths.

So the King and his warriors sallied forth, twelve in number; with them went the spoiler of the treasure-house, the man whose theft had caused the trouble; he was bidden to guide the King to the house of the dragon, the lonely mound by the sea, stored with wealth untold.

Before long the barrow was sighted, hard by the ocean. Beowulf halted his men; he spoke to them sorrowful words of farewell; his heart was heavy with foreboding; the end of a heroic life was nigh.

Said the war-worn warrior: "Many a contest have I waged since my youth, many times won victory. Once again I shall seek the strife, once again win fame. Shield and mail-coat shall protect me against the fiery foe, the winged warrior. From him I will not flee, but will fight till the quarrel is decided. Await me here on this mountain. It is not your task, but mine, to measure might with this monster."

So the brave captain, the lord and keeper of the Goths, set himself to the battle. He moved forward towards the barrow; he lifted up his voice and called aloud; the sound reached the guardian of the treasure, the lurking monster within. At once there came from the doorway a spurt of smoking breath; the ground trembled.

Shield on arm and sword in hand stood the Gothic leader.

The Worm advanced, not without fear of its foe. The sword of Beowulf flashed in the light; it struck the grisly creature; strong was the stroke, but it availed not; the blade-edge pierced not the long scales.

Fire flashed forth from the dragon's mouth; the air was filled with destroying sparks. Once more the fighters closed; Beowulf seemed shrouded in flame; sore need had he of help in the struggle. But his warriors failed him; fear held them back; they slunk to the wood; this was no *man's* fight in which they might share.

One only mastered his fear; his name was Wiglaf, a warrior beloved of his lord. He spake to his comrades: "Our liege lord has need of us; the devouring flame encircles him. Shame on us if we rescue him not!" Then he sped to the fight; with brave words he rallied his captain and King, urged him on to the battle, stood by to support him.

But his shield was of linden, and ere long he was shieldless. The dragon-flame devoured it, reduced it to ashes. The warrior found a refuge only beneath the iron shield of Beowulf.

III.

There came to the mind of Beowulf memories of mighty deeds done in days of old. He summoned up his spirit; he smote with his sword a desperate blow; the head of the monster was pierced, but the blade flew in splinters; the well-tempered sword had failed the fighter at his need.

On came the winged one, thirsting for vengeance. With sharp teeth he seized the hero, gripped him by the neck, tore his flesh, spilt his blood on the plain. But Wiglaf the helper smote the monster beneath the head. His sword found an entrance; the winged warrior fell wounded.

Beowulf grasped his war-knife; he struck the Worm in the middle, a death dealing-blow, a conquering stroke. They had quelled the fire-breather, dealt death to the ravager.

But the King of the Goths, the dauntless warrior, was sorely wounded; he sat on a stone near the mound, the treasure-house bereft of its guardian. To him the faithful warrior brought help; he loosed the helmet of his chief, and bore him healing water from the spring.

Well did the hero know that his hours were numbered, that death was immediately nigh. "I have ruled my people many years," he said, "and no monarch has dared to attack me. Wisely have I ruled with justice and mercy; hence have I comfort now that death is at hand. Go thou, Wiglaf beloved, enter the ancient treasure-house, fetch forth the gold, the precious vessels, the costly gems; let me behold the rich treasure before my life departeth."

Then Wiglaf, obedient to his lord, entered the barrow, the den of the Worm, now dead on the plain. There he saw many wonders—helmets of heroes, ornaments and trinkets, vessels of gold and vessels of silver, a banner all golden, reflecting the day-gleam, and lighting the treasury with burnished rays.

In his arms he bore them from their store-house, returning as often as there was need; he laid them down on the sward and arranged them before the eyes of his lord. Beowulf, now nigh unto death, roused himself from his weakness. "I offer my thanks," he said, "to the Almighty Captain, the Lord of Glory, that I have been able to win such treasure for my people. My time draws nigh. Command my warriors to build on the headland by the sea a cairn of huge stones; let that be my memorial and a guide to seafarers; men shall call it Beowulf's Barrow."

The King took from his neck the collar of gold: he gave it to Wiglaf the warrior, who had helped him in his need. To him also he gave his burnished helm, his kingly crown, and his coat of mail. "My kinsmen have departed," he said, "captains and heroes, men of renown, I go to join them." Then from his bosom his spirit departed to receive the reward of the Just.

From the Old English Beowulf Poem.

A CHILD'S THOUGHT OF GOD.

THEY say that God lives very high ;

But if you look above the pines

You cannot see our God ; and why ?

And if you dig down in the mines

You never see Him in the gold,

Though from him all that's glory shines.

God is so good, He wears a fold

Of heaven and earth across His face—

Like secrets kept, for love, untold.

But still I feel that His embrace

Slides down by thrills through all things made,

Through sight and sound of every place :

As if my tender mother laid

On my shut lips her kisses' pressure,

Half waking me at night, and said,

"Who kissed you through the dark, dear guesser ?"

E. B. Browning

'TIS THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER.

'Tis the last rose of summer

Left blooming alone ;

All her lovely companions

Are faded and gone ;

No flower of her kindred,

No rosebud is nigh

To reflect back her blushes,

To give sigh for sigh.

I'll not leave thee, thou lone one,

To pine on the stem ;

Since the lovely are sleeping,

Go sleep thou with them.

Thus kindly I scatter

Thy leaves o'er the bed,

Where thy mates of the garden

Lie scentless and dead.

THE SOLITARY ROSE

So soon may I follow
 When friendships decay ;
 And from Love's shining circle
 The gems drop away.
 When true hearts lie withered,
 And fond ones are flown,
 Oh ! who would inhabit
 This bleak world alone ?

Thomas Moore.

THE SOLITARY ROSE.

O HAPPY rose, red rose, that bloomest lonely
 Where there are none to gather while they love thee ;
 Thou art perfumed by thine own fragrance only,
 Resting like incense round thee and above thee ;
 Thou hearest nought save some pure stream that flows ;
 O happy rose.

What though for thee no nightingales are singing ;
 They chant the eve, but hush them in the morning.
 Near thee no little moths and bees are winging
 To steal thy honey when the day is dawning ;
 Thou keep'st thy sweetness till the twilight's close,
 O happy rose.

Then rest in peace, thou lone and lovely flower ;
 Yea, be thou glad, knowing that none are near thee
 To mar thy beauty in a wanton hour,
 And scatter all thy leaves nor deign to wear thee.
 Securely in thy solitude repose,
 O happy rose.

C. G. Rossetti.

SONG.

JOG on, jog on, the foot-path way,
 And merrily hent the stile-a ;
 A merry heart goes all the day,
 Your sad tires in a mile-a.

W. Shakespeare.

THE PILGRIMS TO CANTERBURY.

I.

APRIL with sweetest showers had banished the drought of March and pierced to the roots of the plants, soon to show the blossoms of the spring-time. The light scented breeze in every holt and heath had stirred the tender crops to newness of life. The little birds made sweetest melody, roused to song by the spirit of the spring.

At such a time folks long to go on pilgrimages;* palmers to seek foreign strands and do reverence at far-off shrines: and from each shire of England people wend to Canterbury there to seek the martyr Saint Thomas of blessed memory.

It was one day in such a spring-time that I rested for a while at the Tabard Inn, in Southwark before setting out on the journey to Canterbury. As night drew on, there came to the inn a large number of pilgrims, men and women, of all degrees who by chance had met together. The stables gave lodging to their beasts, the roomy inn to themselves, and before long I had made friends with each, and had joined their party. Before we went to rest we agreed to rise early, and to set out on our way together.

There were nine and twenty in the pilgrim band, and perhaps you would like to know who and what they were.

There was a Knight, a worthy man who had loved truth and honour, frankness and courtesy since he first began to ride. In battle for his lord he had ridden far both in Christian and in heathen lands, and had won great honour by his worth. He had taken part in fifteen battles, and thrice had met and slain his foeman in the lists. Though a soldier, he was wary and wise, and in gentleness he excelled a woman. Foul speech never soiled his lips whatever his company. He was indeed a very perfect noble knight.

* In the time of Chaucer, from whose poems the reading is taken.

With the knight rode his son, a young Squire, a bachelor and full of the high spirit of youth; his locks were curled as though they had been laid in a press, and his age I should guess at twenty years; he was straight of limb, and wonderfully nimble and strong. He had engaged in war in Flanders, in Artois, and in Picardy, and well had borne himself in knightly wise.

His clothes were embroidered like a meadow full of fresh flowers white and red. All day he sang or played on his flute, and he was as bright as the month of May. His gown was short, with long and wide sleeves; he sat well in the saddle, could ride perfectly, and knew how to make songs, to paint, write and dance as well as joust. His manner was courteous and humble; he was ready to serve, and was wont to carve before his father at the table, as it was the custom for squires to do.

A single yeoman rode with them, clad in coat and hood of green. Under his belt he carried a sheaf of peacock arrows, bright and keen, and in his hand he bare a mighty bow. He knew well how to dress an arrow as well as all the usages of woodcraft; at one side he carried sword and buckler, and at the other hung a sharp-pointed dagger; a horn hung by a green baldric over his back; he was a true forester as I well believe.

II.

Then there was a nun, a Prioress, named Madam Eglantine, who ever shyly smiled. She could sing the services through her nose most musically and speak French too—as it is spoken in London. At meat she was very dainty, letting no morsel fall from her lips, and she did not dip her fingers very far into the sauce. She was an amiable woman, stately and wishful to be held worthy of reverence; so pitiful she was that she would weep if she saw a mouse caught in a trap. She carried some little dogs, which she fed on roast meat, milk and finest bread, and sorely would

she have wept had one of them died, or had been struck by anyone.

Her nose was straight ; her eyes were gray as glass ; her mouth was small, with lips both soft and red ; she had a fair forehead, that measured, I should think, about a span across. Her wimple was daintily plaited ; she wore a neat cloak, and carried on her arm a roll of coral beads, on which hung a brooch of gold. In her company rode another nun, her attendant, and three priests.

Then came a Monk, an able man, who loved both hunting and riding, and kept many a dainty horse in his stable. As he rode you might hear his bridle jingling as clearly as a chapel bell. A jolly man he was, richly dressed, with bald and shining crown and rolling eyes. There was also a Friar, who carried a number of knives and pins to give as presents to people. He took care to avoid the sick and poor, but to the rich and hospitable he was ever courteous and humble. *He could play the harp and sing, and when he did so his eyes twinkled as do the stars on a frosty night.*

A Merchant followed, a man with a forked beard, dressed in motley, with a Flemish beaver hat upon his head ; he was a worthy man, and keen at a bargain.

There was also a Clerk, or scholar of Oxford, who had long given his mind to learning. His horse was as lean as a rake, and he himself was not very fat, I assure you ; very threadbare was his outer garment, for he had as yet no benefice, but he would rather have had at his bed's head twenty books bound in black or red than rich robes, or violin, or psaltery—indeed, he spent all the money he could get, though that was not much, on books and learning. He never spoke more than was needful, though what he said was very prudent and full of wisdom ; gladly would he learn and gladly teach.

III.

A busy Lawyer was of the company, a discreet man, whose words were wise, and who knew the laws right well; he had many fees, and nowhere could be found a busier man, though he seemed to be even busier than he really was.

There was a Franklin, whose beard was white as the daisies and complexion very ruddy. He loved in the morning a sop of wine, and so plentiful was the good cheer in his house that it seemed to snow meat and drink there; the table in his hall always stood ready covered. A knife and a pouch of silk, white as morning milk, hung at his girdle. He had been sheriff and knight of the shire, for he was a man held in great honour.

A Haberdasher, a Carpenter, a Weaver, a Dyer, and a Tapestry-maker were also among the pilgrims. Each seemed a well-to-do townsman, and fitted to be an alderman; and their wives would doubtless have been proud to have them so, for it would have been a pleasant thing to be called "Madam" and to go to church with servants bearing their mantles. There was a Cook, too, who could roast, seethe, broil, fry, and make a pie with the best.

Then came a Shipman from the West Country, perhaps from Dartmouth, all bronzed with the summer sun. From Hull to Carthage you would not find a better sailor. With many a tempest had his beard been shaken; he knew all the harbours from Scotland to the Cape of Finisterre, and every creek in Brittany and Spain. His ship was named the *Magdalene*.

The Doctor of Physic knew the cause of every sickness, and the remedy also. He knew the books of the ancient physicians, and his own diet was spare, but good and easy to digest. He was robed in red and bluish-grey cloth lined with taffeta and silk. What money he made he kept closely to himself, for he had a special love of gold.

A Wife of Bath there was, who was more expert at cloth-weaving than even the weavers of Flanders. She was of middle age and rather deaf, but she thought very highly of herself; her face was bold and fair and very red. Many pilgrimages had she made to Rome, Boulogne, Cologne, and elsewhere; she sat easily upon her pony, wore sharp spurs on her feet, and on her head a hat as broad as a buckler or a target.

IV.

There was a good religious man, a poor town Parson, rich in holy thought and work; a learned man, too, who was glad to preach and teach, wonderfully kind and diligent, patient in trouble, and liberal to the poor. His parish was wide and the houses far asunder, but neither rain nor thunder ever prevented him from visiting the farthest of his people in time of sickness or adversity; he went on foot, too, with his staff in his hand. This noble example he set to his people—that he first practised and then preached. He was in very deed a shepherd who kept his fold from the wolf; a holy man himself, he yet had mercy on wrong-doers, though he was not afraid to rebuke them, whether high or low. A better priest I believe there was nowhere to be found. The words of Christ and His twelve Apostles he taught, but first he followed them himself. His brother, a poor Ploughman, rode with him, an honest worker, and a neighbourly man, ready to do anyone a service.

A Reeve, a Miller, a Summoner,* and a Pardoner were in the pilgrim train as well as myself. Our host made us very welcome, and fed us of the best. A large stout man he was, with bright eyes, very merry, and anxious to make others happy. He it was who proposed that, to shorten our journey, each in the company should tell two tales, and two more on the homeward way, and to the traveller who told

* A Church officer who summoned offenders before the archdeacon.



THE PILGRIMAGE T

the best should be given a supper, for which the rest should pay when they had once more reached the Tabard Inn. The host would travel with them and be their guide.

To this the pilgrims agreed, and on the morrow when they were well on their way the Knight began the first of the "Canterbury Tales."

From Chaucer's "Prologue."

THE TALE OF THE CLERK OF OXFORD.

THE tale of the Clerk of Oxford was one which he had learned at Padua of a worthy clerk named Francis Petrarch, the laureate poet, and this was his tale, as you may hear :

I.

At the west side of Italy there was a country named Saluces, which at one time was ruled by a Marquis of high



O CANTERBURY.*

T. Stothard, R.A.

lineage—a handsome man, strong, young, full of honour and courtesy—whose name was Walter. He spent nearly all his time, however, in pleasure-seeking, and his people, who loved and respected him, were very much grieved at this; they thought, moreover, that if the Marquis had a wife he would become less careless. So they went to him, and with all due respect and offer of humble service told him so; they also offered to choose for him a wife in a very short time.

“My dear people,” said the Marquis, “I do not wish to marry; but since you desire it I will do so. But you must let me alone in choosing of my wife, and you for your part must honour and obey whomsoever I choose as if she were an emperor’s daughter.” To this they assented heartily; there was no man said nay.

* For Key, see p. 224

II.

Not far away from the Marquis's palace dwelt a very poor man named Janicula, who had a daughter Griselda, one of the fairest maidens under the sun, who knew more of labour than of idle ease. She was a duteous daughter to her poor old father, and made his living and her own by spinning and seething herbs. This maiden the Marquis had often seen while out hunting, and he had made up his mind to wed her only if ever he should take a wife.

The day appointed for the wedding arrived, and as yet no one knew who the bride was to be; but everything else was ready, even the clothes and ornaments for the unknown bride, and all the palace was put in array.

In the early morning the Marquis set out with a gay company and rode to the village of which I spoke. Griselda, quite innocent of what was in store, had gone to fetch water from the well, and meant to hurry homeward to get some sight of the wedding. "I will stand in our doorway with the other maidens," said she, "and maybe I shall behold the bride on her way to the castle."

But as she was entering her father's cottage the Marquis met her. "Where is your father, Griselda?" he asked courteously; and she answered right humbly: "My lord, he is here." Entering the lowly cottage, he drew the old man aside and told him that he wished to make Griselda his bride. Janicula was so much astonished that at first he could not speak, but stood quaking before his lord.

At last he found his voice, and told the Marquis that in all things he would be ruled by him. Then the trembling Griselda was called forward, and the Marquis asked her whether she would be his obedient wife. "My lord," she said, "I am unworthy of the honour, but let it be as you will. As for me, I swear that never willingly in word or thought will I disobey you, even if I were to die."

"This is enough," said the Marquis, who then bade his

servants array the maiden in her bridal robes, and thereupon wedded her; and, mounted upon a snow-white horse, Griselda was led to the palace amid great rejoicing. To speed the tale I may say here that the lowly maiden bore herself as the wife of the Marquis as though she had been nourished in an emperor's hall; she was so discreet, so kind and gentle, that each of her people who saw her loved her forthwith.

III.

Some time afterwards some evil spirit put into the heart of the Marquis to test the patience and obedience of his good wife. So, putting on a stern look, he told her that, though she was very dear to him, she was not so to his people, who were beginning to be discontented because she, a poor girl, had been raised to such a lofty estate. And he asked her whether she was willing to give up her little daughter to be dealt with as his people desired. "My child and I are yours," she said; "thy will is in my heart, and always shall be." The Marquis left the chamber, and ere long a rough man entered, who said:

"Madam, I am commanded to carry your child hence;" and he seized the little one and made as though he would kill it. Griselda, mindful of her promise, sat as meek and still as a lamb, asking only in a piteous voice for leave to kiss the child and to hold it once more to her breast. This was granted her, and then her little daughter was borne from her sight and taken to the Marquis, who commanded that the child should be sent to the house of his sister, there to be nourished unknown to his wife.

And, despite her heartache, Griselda never reproached her lord, remembering her promise to obey in all things.

IV.

Six years passed, and once more the Marquis cruelly determined to put his good and patient wife to the test.

She had a little son, now two years old, who was one day to rule in his father's place; and the Marquis said that his people were murmuring that the grandson of the poor Janicula was to be their lord. He had determined to deal with this child, he added, as with the first, whom Griselda thought was dead.

"I have had no joy in my children," said the poor oppressed Griselda; "but do your will. If I knew that my death would please you, I should be glad to die." Her patience touched even the heart of the unworthy Marquis, but he stifled his pity and left the room. Once more his servant entered and bore away the child, but she made no moan, though she loved her son very dearly. This child was secretly sent to join his sister, and things went on much the same as before.

But soon the report went abroad that the Marquis had caused his children to be slain, and the hearts of the people were turned from their lord, whom now they hated sorely. But he did not care, and madly determined to prove still further the patience of Griselda. He made up his mind to send her away and to take another wife; and even this, when she heard a report of it, she bore with patience.

By this time the daughter of Griselda was grown into a beautiful girl, and the Marquis sent for her and her brother, bidding those few who were in the secret not to tell whose children they were.

V.

The Marquis then made known his will to Griselda, once more making the desire of his people the excuse for the step he was taking. He was not free, he said, to please himself as a ploughman or any other lowly person would be; he must please his people by sending her away. "My lord," said Griselda, "I never was high-minded, but an humble servant to you: I shall return to my father, and

with him dwell to the end of my life. God send you happiness!"

Then with a sad heart the lady made ready to leave the palace; and, seeing her gentle patience, the hard, cruel heart of the Marquis was moved with pity, and he turned away unable to watch her set out for her father's house. And she went on her way without a tear, though the people who followed her wept for very pity. Janicula met her, weeping sorrowfully, and with him she dwelt quietly as before. Was ever patience like to hers?

VI.

Meanwhile the children of Griselda were on their way to their father's palace, and the plan of the Marquis was this. He pretended that the maiden was coming to take Griselda's place, and he was cruel enough to send for the poor lady, and command her to make ready the palace for the newcomers. Even this Griselda performed, mindful ever of her promise of obedience. As for the people, changeful as a vane, they were as ready to cheer for their new lady as they had been for the old.

Ere long the maiden and the youth reached the palace and were received by Griselda with great honour and reverence; and while the company sat at meat Griselda busied herself in the hall, until the cruel Marquis called to her and said:

"How like you this beautiful maiden?"

"Right well, my lord," said she. "I never saw a fairer, in good faith. But," she added, "I beseech you to treat her kindly, for she could not, so tender is she, endure adversity as I have done."

No longer could the Marquis carry on the cruel game. "This is enough, Griselda," he said; "the maiden is thy daughter; that other is thy son, and my heir. Take them again, for now thou canst not say that thy children are lost to thee." And he added more to the effect that he had

intended only to prove her patience, and had not acted in malice or unkindness.

But Griselda did not heed him, for she had fallen in a swoon for piteous joy, and when she recovered she called her children to her, weeping pitifully, and embraced them tenderly, like a loving mother.

"Oh, my dear children," she said, "your poor mother thought that surely cruel beasts had torn you to pieces!" And she held them tightly clasped to her breast, and with tears of joyfulness thanked the Marquis, though he had tried her so sorely.

Once more Griselda was restored to her rightful place, and for many a year in high prosperity she lived with her husband and her dear children; and with them lived Janicula, till the end of his days. The son of the marquis in time succeeded his father, but he did not try the patience of *his* wife in the cruel way in which his mother had been treated.

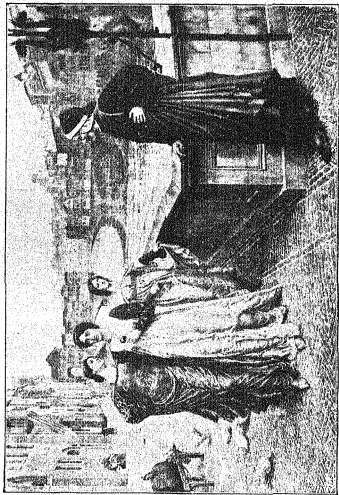
"*And Petrarch wrote the tale,*" added the Clerk, "*that every man in his degree should be patient in adversity, as was Griselda.*"

From the "Canterbury Tales."

THE GREAT POET OF ITALY.

Dante and the Blacksmith.—Dante one day heard a blacksmith beating iron upon the anvil and singing some of his verses like a song, jumbling the lines together and confusing them so that it seemed to Dante that he was receiving great injury.

He said nothing, but going into the blacksmith's shop, where there were many articles made of iron, he took up



BEATRICE AND DANTE.

(From the Original Painting by Henry Holiday, by permission of the Corporation of Liverpool.)

the hammer and pincers and scales, and many other things, and threw them out into the road.

The blacksmith, turning round upon him, cried out "What are you doing? Are you mad?" "What are *you* doing?" said Dante. "I am working at my proper business," said the blacksmith, "and you are spoiling my work, throwing it out into the road."

Said Dante: "If you do not like me to spoil your things, do not spoil mine." "What things of yours am I spoiling?" asked the man. And Dante replied: "You are singing something of mine, but not as I made it. I have no other trade but this, and you spoil it for me."

The blacksmith, too proud to confess his fault, but not knowing how to reply, gathered up his things and returned to his work, and when he sang again he let Dante alone.

Beatrice.—This most gentle lady was in so great favour with all, that when she passed in the street everyone ran to see her. And when she approached anyone, so much was his heart touched, that he did not dare to raise his eyes, nor to answer her greeting. And she, crowned and clothed with humility, went on her way, showing no pride in that which she saw and heard. And many said, when she had passed: "This is not a woman, but one of the most beautiful angels of heaven."

Dante in Old Age.—The poet was of middle height and stooped when he walked, being now of ripe age; his aspect was grave and quiet, and his dress seemly and serious, as became his years. His face was long, his eyes rather large, his nostrils wide, and the underlip a little prominent: his complexion was dark, his hair and beard thick, black, and curling, and his countenance always sad and thoughtful.

And thus it happened, one day in Verona, that as he passed before a door, where several women were seated, one of them said softly, but not too low to be heard by him, and those who were with him: "Do you see him who goes to the under-world, and comes back again when he pleases, and

brings back news of those who are down below?" To which another of the women answered simply: "Certainly you speak the truth. See how scorched his beard is, and how dark he is from the heat and smoke!"

When Dante heard this talk behind him, and saw that the women believed entirely what they said, he was pleased, and, content that they should think this of him, went on his way with a smile.

HOME THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD.

I.

Oh, to be in England,
Now that April's there !
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough,
In England—now !

II.

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows !
Hark, where my blossom'd pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush. He sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture !
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower,
Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower !

Robert Browning.

SONG—THE OWL.

WHEN cats run home and light is come,
And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far-off stream is dumb,
And the whirring sail goes round,
And the whirring sail goes round ;
Alone, and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock bath sung beneath the thatch
Twice or thrice his roundelay,
Twice or thrice his roundelay ;
Alone, and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

A. Tennyson.

THE NOBLE NATURE.

IT is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make men better be ;
Or standing like an oak three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald and sere ;
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night ;
It was the plant and flower of Light.
In small proportions we just beauty see ;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

Ben Jonson.

ARTHUR, FLOWER OF KING

I. HOW ARTHUR WAS CHOSEN KING.

Utherpendragon, King of Britain, had a son, who, at his birth, was delivered to the enchanter Merlin, and placed by him in the keeping of a knight named Sir Ector. Now King Uther fell sick unto death, and seeing this, Merlin in haste summoned the lords of the realm to the King's palace.

On the morrow all the Barons with Merlin came before the King. Then Merlin said aloud unto King Uther : " Sir, shall your son Arthur be King after your days of this realm ? " Then Utherpendragon turned to him, and said in hearing of them all : " I give him God's blessing and mine, and bid him pray for my soul, and righteously and worshipfully that he claim the crown upon forfeiture of my blessing. " And therewith he yielded up the ghost.

Then stood the realm in great jeopardy a long while, for every lord that was mighty of men made him strong, and many wished to become King. Then Merlin went to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and counselled him to send for all the lords of the realm, and all the gentlemen of arms, that they should come to London by Christmas, because, as Jesus was born on that night, He would doubtless of His great mercy show by some miracle who would be rightwise King of this realm.

So in the greatest church of London, when matins was done, there was seen in the churchyard, against the altar, a great stone foursquare, and in the midst thereof was an anvil of steel, a foot in height, and therein stuck a fair sword naked by the point, and letters of gold were written about the sword, and said thus : " *Whoso pulleth this sword out of this stone and anvil is rightwise King born of Britain.* " So all the states went to behold the stone and the sword.

And when they saw the scripture, some assayed, such as would have been King. But none might stir the sword nor move it. And then there was made a cry, that every man should assay that wished to win the sword. And upon New Year's Day the Barons made a joust and a tournament. And so it happened that Sir Ector rode to the joust, and with him rode Sir Kay, his son, and young Arthur that was his nourished brother. So as they rode toward the jousts, Sir Kay missed his sword, for he had left it at his father's lodging, and so he prayed young Arthur to ride for his sword. "I will, with a good will," said Arthur, and rode fast after the sword; and when he came home, the lady and all were gone out to see the jousting. Then Arthur said to himself, "I will ride to the churchyard, and take the sword with me that sticketh in the stone, for my brother Sir Kay shall not be without a sword this day." So when he came to the churchyard Arthur alighted, and he handled the sword, and pulled it out of the stone, and came to his brother Sir Kay, and delivered him the sword.

And as soon as Sir Kay saw the sword, he wist well that it was the sword of the stone, so he rode to his father, Sir Ector, and said: "Sir, lo, here is the sword of the stone: wherefore I must be King of this land." When Sir Ector beheld the sword, he returned again, and came to the church, and there they alighted all three, and went into the church; and anon he made Sir Kay to swear upon a book how he came by that sword.

"Sir," said Sir Kay, "by my brother Arthur, for he brought it to me." "How gat you this sword?" said Sir Ector to Arthur; whereto Arthur replied, "When I came home for my brother's sword, I found nobody at home to deliver me his sword, and so I thought my brother Sir Kay should not be swordless, and I came thither and pulled it out of the stone."

"Now," said Sir Ector, "God will have it so; for there should never man have drawn out this sword, but he shall be rightwise King of this land. Now let me see whether ye

can put the sword there as it was and pull it out again." "That is no mastery," said Arthur; and he put it in the stone. Therewith Sir Ector assayed to pull out the sword, and failed.

"Now assay you," said Sir Ector to Sir Kay. And anon he pulled at the sword with all his might, but it would not be. "Now shall ye assay," said Sir Ector to Arthur. "With a good will," said Arthur, and pulled it out easily. And therewithal Sir Ector kneeled down to the earth, and Sir Kay also. "Alas!" said Arthur, "mine own dear father and my brother, why kneel you to me?" "Nay, nay, my lord Arthur, it is not so; I was never your father, nor of your blood, but I wot well that you are of an higher blood than I weened you were." And then Sir Ector told him all, how he was given him to nourish, and by whose commandment, and by Merlin's deliverance.

Then Arthur made great moan when he understood that Sir Ector was not his father. "Sir," said Sir Ector unto Arthur, "will you be my good and gracious lord when you are King?" "Else were I to blame," said Arthur, "for you are the man in the world that I am most beholden unto, and my good lady and mother your wife, that as well as her own hath fostered and kept me; and if ever it be God's will that I be King, as you say, ye shall desire of me what I may do, and I shall not fail you—God forbid I should fail you." "Sir," said Sir Ector, "I will ask no more of you but that you will make my son, your foster-brother Sir Kay, seneschal of all your lands." "That shall be done, sir," said Arthur, "and more, by the faith of my body; and never man shall have that office but he, while that he and I live."

Therewithal they went unto the Archbishop, and told him how the sword was achieved. And upon the twelfth day all the Barons came thither to assay to take the sword, who that would assay. But there before them all there might none take it out but only Arthur; wherefore there were many great lords wroth, and said, "It was a great shame

unto them all for the realm to be governed by a boy of no high blood born." And so they fell out at that time, that it was put off till Candlemas.

And at Candlemas many more great lords came thither to have won the sword, but none of them might prevail. And again Arthur pulled out the sword easily, whereof the Barons were sore aggrieved, and put it in delay till the high feast of *Easter*. And as Arthur sped before, so did he at *Easter*; and yet there were some of the great lords had indignation that Arthur should be their King, and put it off in delay till the feast of Pentecost.

And at the feast of Pentecost all manner of men assayed to pull at the sword that would assay; and none might prevail, but Arthur pulled it out before all the lords and commons that were there, wherefore all the commons cried at once: "We will have Arthur unto our King; we will put him no more in delay, for we all see that it is God's will that he shall be our King, and who that holdeth against it we will slay him." And so anon was the coronation made, and there was he sworn to the lords and commons to be a true King.

II. HOW ARTHUR WON THE SWORD EXCALIBUR.

As they rode on a certain day, King Arthur said to Merlin, "I have no sword." "No force," said Merlin; "hereby is a sword that shall be yours if I may." So they rode till they came to a lake, and in the midst of the lake King Arthur was ware of an arm clothed in white samite, that held a fair sword in the hand. "Lo," said Merlin to the King, "yonder is the sword that I spake of." With that they saw a damsel going upon the lake. Therewith came the damsel to King Arthur and saluted him, and he her again.

"Damsel," said the King, "what sword is that which the arm holdeth yonder above the water? I would it were mine, for I have no sword." "Sir King," said the damsel

of the lake, "that sword is mine, and if ye will give me a gift when I ask it you, ye shall have it." "By my faith," said King Arthur, "I will give you any gift that you ask or desire." "Well," said the damsel, "go ye into yonder barge, and row yourself unto the sword, and take it and the scabbard with you, and I will ask my gift when I see my time."

So King Arthur and Merlin alighted, tied their horses to two trees, and went into the barge. And when they came to the sword that the hand held, King Arthur took it up by the handle and took it with him, and the arm and the hand went under the water; and so King Arthur looked upon the sword, and liked it passing well. "Whether like you better," said Merlin, "the sword or the scabbard?" "The sword," said King Arthur. "Ye are more unwise," said Merlin, "for the scabbard is worth ten of the sword, for while ye have the scabbard upon you ye shall lose no blood, be ye never so sore wounded; therefore keep well the scabbard always with you." So they rode on to Caerleon.

III. HOW ARTHUR WEDDED GUENEVER, AND HOW HE HAD THE ROUND TABLE.

King Arthur, for the most part of the days of his life, was much ruled by the counsel of Merlin. So it befell on a time that King Arthur said unto Merlin: "My Barons will let me have no rest, but needs they will have that I take a wife, and I will none take but by thy counsel and by thine advice." "It is well done," said Merlin, "that ye take a wife, for a man of your bounty and nobleness should not be without a wife. Now, is there any fair lady that ye love better than another?" "Yea" said King Arthur, "I love Guenever, the daughter of King Leodegrance, of the land of Cameliard, which Leodegrance holdeth in his house the Table Round, that ye told he had of my father Uther. And this damsel is the most gentle and fairest lady that I know living, or yet that ever I could find."

"Sir," said Merlin, "as for her beauty and fairness, she is one of the fairest that live; but if you loved her not so well as you do, I would find you a damsel of beauty and of goodness that should like you and please you if your heart were not set. But where a man's heart is set, he will be loth to return." "That is truth," said King Arthur.

And Merlin went forth to King Leodegrance of Camelard, and told him of the desire of the King, that he would have to his wife Guenever, his daughter. "That is to me," said King Leodegrance, "the best tidings that ever I heard, that so worthy a King of prowess and of nobleness will wed my daughter. And as for my lands, I will give him if it might please him; but he hath lands enough: he needeth none. But I shall send him a gift that shall please him much more, for I shall give him the Table Round which Utherpendragon gave me; and when it is full complete, there is an hundred knights and fifty; and as for an hundred good knights, I have them myself, but I lack fifty, for so many have been slain in my days."

And so King Leodegrance delivered his daughter Guenever unto Merlin, and the Table Round with the hundred knights; and they rode till they came unto London.

When King Arthur heard of the coming of Guenever and the hundred knights with the Table Round, he made great joy for their coming. "Now, Merlin," said King Arthur, "go thou and espy me in all this land fifty knights that be of most prowess and worship." Within short time Merlin made the best speed he might, and found twenty-eight good knights, but no more could he find.

Then the Archbishop of Canterbury was sent for, and he blessed the sieges of the Table Round with great royalty and devotion, and there set the twenty-eight knights in their sieges. And when they were gone, Merlin found in the sieges letters of gold that told the knights' names that had sat therein.

Then the King was wedded at Camelot unto Dame

Guenever, in the Church of Saint Steven's, with great solemnity.

IV. HOW SIR LAUNCELOT DELIVERED THREESCORE LADIES AND DAMSELS.

Now turn we unto Sir Launcelot, that rode with a damsel in a fair highway. "Sir," said the damsel, "here by this way haunteth a knight that distresseth all ladies and gentlewomen." "What," said Sir Launcelot, "he doth great shame unto the order of knighthood and against his oath; it is pity that he liveth. But, fair damsel, ye shall ride yourself alone before, and I will keep myself in covert." So the damsel rode on by the way, a soft, ambling pace.

And within a while came that knight out of the wood, and there he put the damsel from her horse, and then she cried. With that came Sir Launcelot as fast as he might, and he struck that knight such a buffet on the helmet, that he clave his head unto the throat. "Now hast thou thy payment that thou long hast deserved!" "That is truth," said the damsel, "for this knight did attend to destroy and distress ladies and gentlewomen, and his name was Sir Piers du Forest Savage."

"Now, damsel," said Sir Launcelot, "will ye any more service of me?" "Nay, sir," said she, "at this time; but God preserve you wheresoever ye go, for the most courteous knight thou art, and meekest unto all ladies and gentlewomen that now liveth." So Sir Launcelot and the damsel departed.

And then rode he into a deep forest two days and more, and had strait lodging. So on the third day he rode over a great, long bridge, and there starteth upon him suddenly a passing foul churl, and he smote his horse on the nose that he turned about, and asked him why he rode over that bridge without his licence. "Why should not I ride this way?" said Sir Launcelot. "Thou shalt not choose," said the churl; and so lashed at him with a mighty great club

full of pins of iron. Then Sir Launcelot drew his sword, and clave his head. And at the end of the bridge was a fair village, and Sir Launcelot went straight into the castle. And then he alighted and tied his horse to a ring in the wall, and there he saw a fair, green court, and thither he went, for there he thought was a fair place to fight in. So he looked about, and saw much people in doors and windows, that said : " Fair knight, thou art unfortunate."

Anon came there upon him two great giants, well armed, all save the head, with two horrible clubs in their hands. Sir Launcelot put his shield before him, and put the stroke away of the one giant, and with his sword he clave his head asunder. When his fellow saw that, he ran away as if he were mad for fear of the horrible strokes, and Sir Launcelot after him with all his might, and smote him on the shoulder and clave him to the middle.

Then Sir Launcelot went into the hall, and there came before him threescore ladies and damsels, and all kneeled unto him and thanked God and him of their deliverance. " For, sir," said they, " the most part of us have been here these seven years their prisoners, and we have worked all manner of silk works for our meat, and we are all great gentlewomen born, and blessed be the time, knight, that ever thou wert born ; for thou hast done the most worship that ever did knight in the world, and we all pray you to tell us your name, that we may tell our friends who delivered us out of prison."

" Fair damsels," he said, " my name is Sir Launcelot du Lake. . . . Now may ye say unto your friends who hath delivered you, and greet them all from me, and if I come in any of your marches, show me such cheer as ye have cause ; and what treasure there is in this castle I give it you, as a reward for your grievance."

V. HOW SIR GALAHAD GOT HIS SHIELD.

Now rideth Sir Galahad yet without shield; and at the fourth day after even-song he came to a white abbey, and there he was received with great reverence, and led to a chamber; and there he was unarmed, and then was he ware of two knights of the Round Table; one was King Bagdemagus, and that other was Sir Uwaine.

And when they saw him, they went unto him and made of him great solace, and so they went to supper. "Sirs," said Sir Galahad, "what adventure brought you hither?" "Sir," said they, "it is told us that within this place is a shield that no man may bear about his neck without being mischieved or dead within three days, or else maimed for ever." "Sir," said King Bagdemagus, "if I may not achieve the adventure of this shield, ye shall take it upon you, for I am sure ye shall not fail." "Sir," said Sir Galahad, "I agree right well thereto, for I have no shield."

So on the morrow they arose, and King Bagdemagus asked where the adventurous shield was; anon a monk led him behind an altar, where the shield hung as white as any snow, but in the midst was a red cross. "Sir," said the monk, "this shield ought to be hanged about no knight's neck except he be the worthiest knight of the world, and therefore I counsel you knights to be well advised." "Well," said King Bagdemagus, "I wot well that I am not the best knight of the world, but yet shall I assay to bear it." So he bore it out of the monastery, and then he said unto Sir Galahad: "If it will please you, I pray you abide here still, till ye know how I shall speed."

Then King Bagdemagus took with him a squire who should bring tidings unto Sir Galahad how he sped. Then, when they had ridden two miles and came in a fair valley before an hermitage, they saw a goodly knight come from that part in white armour, horse and all, and he came as fast as his horse might run, with his spear in the

rest, and King Bagdemagus dressed his spear against him, and brake it upon the White Knight. But the other struck him so hard that he brake the mail, and thrust him through the right shoulder, for the shield covered him not as at that time, and so he bore him from his horse; and therewith he alighted and took the white shield from him, saying: "Knight, thou hast done thyself great folly, for this shield ought not to be borne but by him that shall have no peer that liveth."

Then he came to King Bagdemagus's squire, and said: "Bear this shield unto the good knight Sir Galahad that thou left in the abbey, and greet him well from me." Then the squire went unto King Bagdemagus, and asked him whether he were sore wounded or not. "I am sore wounded," said he, "and full hardly I shall escape from death." Then he fetched his horse, and brought him with great pain to an abbey; then was he taken down softly and unarmed, and laid in a bed, and his wound was looked to. He lay there long, and escaped hard with his life.

"Sir Galahad," said the squire, "that knight that wounded King Bagdemagus sendeth you greeting, and bade that ye should bear this shield, wherethrough great adventures shall befall." "Now, blessed be God and fortune," said Sir Galahad. And then he asked his arms, and mounted upon his horse, and hung the white shield about his neck, and commended them unto God.

VI. THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

At the last King Arthur fought with the traitor Modred, and was wounded to death in a great battle.

Then Sir Lucan took up King Arthur on the one part, and Sir Bedivere on the other part, and in the lifting the King swooned. And Sir Lucan fell in a swoon with that lift, and therewith the noble Knight's heart burst. Then Sir Bedivere wept for the death of his brother. "Leave

this weeping and mourning," said King Arthur, "for all this will not avail; for wit thou well, if I might live myself the death of Sir Lucan would grieve me evermore."

"But my time hieth fast," said King Arthur unto Sir Bedivere; "therefore take thou Excalibur, my good sword, and go with it unto yonder water-side, and when thou comest there, I charge thee throw my sword into that water, and come again and tell me what thou shalt see there." "My lord," said Sir Bedivere, "your command shall be done, and I will lightly bring you word again." So Sir Bedivere departed; and by the way he beheld that noble sword, that the pommel and the haft were all of precious stones, and then he said to himself:

"If I throw this rich sword into the water, thereof shall never come good, but harm and loss." Then Sir Bedivere hid Excalibur under a tree, and as soon as he might he came again unto King Arthur, and said he had been at the water, and had thrown the sword into the water. "What sawest thou there?" said the King. "Sir," said he, "I saw *nothing but waves and wind.*" "That is untrue said of thee," said King Arthur; "therefore go thou lightly and do my command, as thou art to me lief and dear. Spare not, but throw it in."

Then Sir Bedivere returned again, and took the sword in his hand; and he thought it sin and shame to throw away that noble sword. And again he hid the sword, and returned and told to the King that he had been at the water and done his command. "What saw ye there?" said the King. "Sir," said he, "I saw nothing but the waters wap and waves wan." "Ah, traitor untrue!" said King Arthur, "now hast thou betrayed me two times. Who would have thought that thou that hast been unto me so lief and dear, and art named a noble knight, would betray me for the rich sword? But now go again lightly, for thy long tarrying putteth me in great jeopardy of my life, for I have taken cold; but except thou do as I command thee, I shall slay

thee with my own hands, for thou wouldst, for my rich sword, see me dead."

Then Sir Bedivere departed, and went to the sword and lightly took it up, and went to the water's side; and there he bound the girdle about the hilt, and then he threw the sword into the water as far as he might; and there came an arm and an hand above the water, and met it and caught it, and so shook it thrice and brandished it. Then the hand vanished away with the sword in the water. So Sir Bedivere came again to the King, and told him what he had seen. "Alas!" said the King, "help me from hence, for I dread me I have tarried too long." Then Sir Bedivere took King Arthur upon his back, and so went with him to the water's side. Even fast by the bank hove a little barge, with many fair ladies in it, and among them all was a Queen, and all had black hoods, and they wept and shrieked when they saw King Arthur.

"Now put me into the barge," said the King, and so he did softly; and there received him three Queens with great mourning, and these three Queens set them down, and in one of their laps King Arthur laid his head. And then that Queen said: "Ah! dear brother, why have ye tarried so long from me? Alas! this wound on your head hath taken cold." Then they rowed from the land, and Sir Bedivere beheld all those ladies go from him. Then Sir Bedivere cried: "Ah! my lord Arthur, what shall become of me now ye go from me, and leave me here alone among mine enemies?"

"Comfort thyself," said King Arthur, "and do as well as thou mayest, for in me is no trust; for I will into the Vale of Avilion to heal me of my grievous wound, and if thou never hear more of me, pray for my soul." But evermore the Queens and the ladies wept and shrieked that it was pity to hear them. And as soon as Sir Bedivere had lost sight of the barge, he wept and wailed, and so took the forest.

From Malory's "History of Prince Arthur, King of Britain."

MEG MERRILIES.

OLD Meg she was a gipsy,
And lived upon the moors ;
Her bed it was the brown heath turf,
And her house was out of doors.
Her apples were swart blackberries,
Her currants pods o' broom ;
Her wine was dew of the wild white rose,
Her book a churchyard tomb.

Her brothers were the craggy hills,
Her sisters larchen-trees ;
Alone with her great family
She lived as she did please.
No breakfast had she many a morn,
No dinner many a noon,
And 'stead of supper she would stare
Full hard against the moon.

But every morn of woodbine fresh
She made her garlanding ;
And every night the dark glen yew
She wore ; and she would sing ;
And with her fingers old and brown
She plaited mats of rushes,
And gave them to the cottagers
She met among the bushes.

Old Meg was brave as Margaret Queen,
And tall as Amazon ;
An old red blanket cloak she wore,
A ship-hat had she on ;
God rest her aged bones somewhere !
She died full long ago !

John Keats

THE BROOK.

I COME from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret,
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I wind about and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel.



THE GIPSY VAGRANTS.

(From the picture by Fred. Walker, A.R.A., by permission of the Trustees of the Tate Gallery.)

And draw them all along, and flow
 To join the brimming river,
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
 I slide by hazel covers ;
 I move the sweet forget-me-nots
 That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
 Among my skimming swallows ;
 I make the netted sunbeam dance
 Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
 In brambly wildernesses ;
 I linger by my shingly bars ;
 I loiter round my cresses ;

And out again I curve and flow
 To join the brimming river,
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.

A. Tennyson

THE SKYLARK.

BIRD of the wilderness,
 Blithesome and cumberless,
 Sweet be thy matin o'er moorland and lea !
 Emblem of happiness,
 Blest is thy dwelling-place,
 Oh to abide in the desert with thee !

Wild is thy lay and loud,
 Far in the downy cloud ;
 Love gives it energy, love gave it birth.
 Where on thy dewy wing,
 Where art thou journeying ?
 Thy lay is in heaven, thy love is on earth.

O'er fell and fountain sheen,
O'er moor and mountain green,
O'er the red streamer that heralds the day,
Over the cloudlet dim,
Over the rainbow's rim,
Musical cherub, soar, singing away !

Then when the gloaming comes,
Low in the heather blooms
Sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be,
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place,
Oh to abide in the desert with thee !

James Hogg.

THE PRINCESS UNA AND THE RED CROSS KNIGHT.

I.

IN the land of the fairies lived and reigned the beautiful Queen Gloriana. Her royal palace stood in a splendid city named Cleopolis, whose outer wall was of gold. The Fairy Queen was as good and gracious as she was lovely to behold, and to her Court came many who sought relief from distress and oppression.

Once upon a time the Queen was keeping her annual twelve days' feast, when there came before her a tall, clownish young man, who asked that to him might be given a chance to prove his valour. The Queen promised this boon, and the youth rested humbly on the floor, awaiting his time.

Soon afterwards there came to Court a fair maiden, dressed in black and riding on a white ass; behind her came a dwarf, carrying a spear and leading a warlike steed, which bore the armour of a knight. The lady fell before

the Queen and made her moan. For many years her aged father and mother, a King and Queen, had been by a huge dragon shut up in a brazen castle. Might she beg of Queen Gloriana one of her knights to do battle with the monster?

At once the clownish young man leapt to his feet, and begged for the adventure. And, having first proved his fitness to wear the armour borne by the charger, he was accepted by the Princess, whose name was Una, and the two left the Court in company.

The armour worn by the Knight was strong and weighty, and on his breast-plate and silver shield he wore a blood-red cross. Una was seated on her white ass, and led by a line a milk-white lamb, which skipped along the plain; the sweet face of the Princess was sad and troubled, and she looked as one who bore in her heart some hidden care. Behind the Knight and the lady walked the dwarf, lagging and slow, as though unwilling to follow his mistress.

They had not gone far on their journey when a sudden storm of rain and thunder forced them to take refuge in a wood through which they rode without marking the way. The storm passed by, and the travellers, thinking to return, found that they were lost. They chose a beaten track, which led them to a hollow cave amidst the thickest wood.

Here the Red Cross Knight dismounted and made ready to enter the cave. Una, fearful of danger, urged him not to do so, and the timid dwarf cried out: "Fly, fly! this is no place for living men!" But the Knight would not be stayed, and, entering the cave, found therein a grisly monster, half serpent, half woman.

Blinded by the sheen of the Knight's armour, the deadly misshapen thing would have slunk away; but the Red Cross Knight leapt upon it as fierce as a lion upon its flying prey. The monster turned, full of rage, and wrapped its loathsome body about the Knight, who was now in sore straits. But he called up his strength, and, freeing one hand, smote the woman-snake a mighty blow on the head.

The horrid monster sank dead at his feet, and the Red Cross Knight sought his lady, who had watched the fight from a distance.

"Fair Knight," said she, "you are well worthy of the armour which you wear, and nobly have you proved your valour on a strong enemy. May you have many such adventures, and in each win like success."

II.

Saint George, for that was the name of the Red Cross Knight, and Princess Una then went on their way. By-and-by they met an aged man, clad in black, barefooted, walking with his eyes bent to the ground; as he went he prayed and smote his breast as if in trouble.

The Knight spoke kindly to him, and was as kindly answered. The old man had news of a strange warrior who was wasting the country and oppressing the weak. Saint George wished to go at once and find him, but Una warned him that unless he rested for that night he could not hope to be victorious in his next combat.

The old man then took them to his little lowly hermitage down in a dale, hard by a forest's side. Here they dismounted and spent the night. But while his guests slept peacefully, the old man went to his study, and there, amidst his magic books, he sat wondering how he could turn the heart of the Red Cross Knight against the Princess Una; for the hermit who seemed so kindly was really the wicked magician Archimago, who loved evil as true men love good.

By his wicked spells and arts he was able to bring about what he wished. When morning was breaking he woke the Red Cross Knight, and with evil tongue so turned his heart against the lady that he hastened to fly from her presence. Donning his armour and mounting his charger, he rode quickly from the hermitage, nor ever looked behind; with him went the dwarf.

Before long the Knight met with another, a faithless

Saracen, and an enemy of the Cross which was borne by Saint George on breast and shield. The stranger knight was strongly armed and mounted, and bore upon his shield the name *Sansfoy*. With him rode a beautiful lady, dressed in gay scarlet adorned with gold and precious pearls.

The lady warned her knight of the approach of Saint George. At once both warriors spurred their horses forward, and the mail-clad chargers met with a loud clash. The lance of each warrior was broken, but, drawing their blades, they began a sword-play which surrounded them with flashing sparks of fire. Then the Red Cross Knight got the victor's stroke, and his enemy fell dead to the earth.

The lady, seeing her champion fall, turned her horse and fled in dismay. But the Red Cross Knight pursued her, and courteously bade her to put fear apart. Then he asked her story, and, melting into tears, she told him.

She, the daughter of a Roman Emperor, had been betrothed to a mighty Prince, who had fallen in battle not long before her bridal day. Wandering in despair, she had met with *Sansfoy*, who had forced her to bear him company. Her name, she said, was *Fidessa*.

"Rest henceforth in safe assurance," said Saint George, who pitied the fair lady's sad plight; "you have found a new friend to aid you, and lost an old foe that did molest you; better is a new friend than an old foe." So they rode together happily, for the Red Cross Knight had forgotten the gentle *Una*, whom he had sworn to protect. But he knew not that *Fidessa*, seemingly so fair, was a wicked and mischievous old witch named *Duessa*, ugly and wrinkled, who had taken the form of a beautiful lady to lead knights astray.

III.

Meanwhile the Princess *Una* was mourning the loss of her knight, and, mounted on her gentle steed, was searching every hill and dale, each wood and plain. But she found him not, and many a weary mile she wandered alone.

One day she betook herself to a shady place to rest her weary limbs awhile. Then there came upon her out of a wood a ramping lion, who rushed at her with gaping mouth. But as he drew nearer he suddenly stopped, and, instead of tearing her to pieces, fawned upon her and licked her lily hands.

From that time he would not leave her, but went with her as a guardian and a faithful mate. When she slept he kept watch; when she waked he waited on her like a faithful hound. Through many wide deserts she passed with the lion for her champion.

One day she overtook a woman, who, seeing the lion, fled from Una in great fear. The Princess followed her, and before long found a small cottage where the woman lived with her blind old mother.

The two women in their fear had barred the wicket, but the lion rent it open with his claws. Within the house the women were crouching in a corner, afraid to draw near the Princess. But Una calmed their fears, and begged from them a night's shelter, which she obtained.

At the dead of night a man knocked at the door of the cottage. He bore on his back a heavy load of booty which he had stolen in various places; for he was a stout and sturdy thief, who robbed by night, and before morning brought his spoil to the women of the cottage.

Unable to gain entrance, for the women feared the lion, he broke open the door in a great rage. But as he stepped over the threshold, the lion leapt quickly upon him and tore him to pieces.

When it was broad day the Princess rose and passed on her way with her fierce guardian by her side. Then the women came out and found what had happened to the robber. Their cries of grief and rage rent the air, and for their loss they blamed the Princess Una, and hoped that plagues and mischief and long misery might fall on her.

Meanwhile the Princess went on her way, and before

long was overtaken by a knight whom she thought to be Saint George, for he bore the holy sign on shield and breast-plate. Overjoyed to meet with him, she gave him loving welcome, to which he replied with promises of faithful service evermore. The stranger was not the true Red Cross Knight, however, but the wicked wizard Archimago, who had taken the form of Saint George to work out his evil plans.

On went the pair conversing happily. The Princess had now no thought of perils past, for one happy hour can make up for many years of sorrow.

They had not ridden far when they saw coming quickly towards them a knight well-mounted and strongly armed. On his shield he bore in red the word *Sansloy*. Seeing the red cross, he spurred forward yet more eagerly to slay the knight who had, he thought, overcome his brother Sansfoy.

The seeming Red Cross Knight met him bravely, but was borne from his saddle to the ground. Sansloy leapt from his horse, and was about to take the life of his enemy, when, rudely tearing off the helmet, he discovered the hoary head of the old wizard.

Great was his surprise, but that of Una was greater. There lay in a trance the old man whom she had thought to be her knight. Sansloy, now coming forward to make her his prisoner, was attacked by the lion. But he was stout and hardy; with his deadly iron brand he pierced the lordly heart of Una's protector. Then he bore away the Princess on his charger, the gentle, milk-white ass following them afar.

IV.

With the false witch Duessa the Red Cross Knight travelled far till at last they came to a splendid palace, which seemed to be the home of a mighty Prince. It was cleverly built of bricks without mortar, full of fair windows

and delightful bowers, and overlaid with shining gold. But, though it was tall and stately, its walls were neither strong nor thick; moreover, it was built on a sandy hill and shook with every breath of heaven.

Its gates were thronged with people of all degrees, who had travelled from far and near to see the beauteous Princess of that palace. She sat high above all on a rich throne, as bright as sunny day, dressed in royal robes, adorned with gold and precious stones. Beneath her feet lay coiled a dreadful dragon, and in her hand she held a bright mirror, in which she looked continually. Lucifera was her name, and the kingdom that she ruled was not hers by right nor did she rule it well.

Before this shining throne the Red Cross Knight and Duessa bowed low, and were thanked for their reverence in a lofty, scornful way; then, rising from her royal seat, the Princess called for her coach and went in state to take the air. Duessa followed in her train close to the car of the Princess; but Saint George would not draw so near, for he somehow felt that his companions were unfit for a true knight of the Red Cross.

When the chariot of the Princess Lucifera returned to the palace it was found that a stranger knight had arrived; his shield bore in blood-red letters the word *Sansjoy*. When he saw the shield of Sansfoy, his brother, borne by the page of Saint George, his spirit rose in anger, and he snatched it away. The Red Cross Knight leapt upon him, rescued the trophy, and the two closed in combat; but the Princess Lucifera commanded them to cease fighting, and promised that on the morrow they should settle their quarrel. Then the company went to rest.

Morning dawned, and the two champions took their places in the lists. The Princess Lucifera sat to view the fight beneath a stately canopy, and Duessa sat over against her in open view. On a tree was hung the shield of Sansfoy, which was to fall to the lot of the victor.

A shrilling trumpet gave the signal and the combat began.

The Saracen was stout and wondrous strong,
And heap'd blows like iron hammers great :
For after blood and vengeance he did long.
The knight was fierce and full of youthly heat,
And doubled strokes like dreaded thunder's threat ;
For all for praise, and honour did he fight.
Both, stricken, strike, and beaten both do beat
That from their shields forth flieth fiery light,
And helmets hewen deep, show marks of either's might.

At last the Saracen struck such a blow on the head of his foe that Saint George reeled and seemed ready to fall ; then he heard the false Duessa cry to the Saracen : " Thine is the shield and I and all." This stirred his wrath, and he leapt forward to smite his enemy. But lo ! a dark cloud fell upon Sansjoy ; he vanished from sight, and the blade of St. George clove the empty air. And this was the work of the false enchantress Duessa.

The Red Cross Knight was hailed with joy as the victor, and borne to the palace, where his wounds were dressed. The false Duessa tended him carefully, weeping for his hurts that bled freshly. But when the next morning dawned the witch found that her knight had fled. For the dwarf who waited on him had spied in a dark dungeon a great crowd of captives who wailed night and day ; and before the dawn the knight, though still weak, had left the dreadful House of Pride.

V.

We left the Princess Una a mournful captive in the hands of the fierce Sansloy. From the power of the wicked Saracen she was ere long delivered, and in a wondrous way.

In the depths of a wild forest the false knight was overtaken by a troop of satyrs—strange, misshapen creatures, whose like he had never before seen. They had heard the piteous cries of the captive Princess, and when they came

in sight Sansloy took horse and fled, leaving Una with the curious troop around her.

The Princess knew not whether to fear or rejoice at her deliverance when she saw the horned creatures with heads of men and bodies of goats. But, guessing from their manner that they meant to be kind to her, she let them lead her down the forest glade. They took her to their King, old Sylvanus, who stood amazed at her beauty and grace. *With these wild creatures she stayed for a long time, not only unharmed, but worshipped as the goddess of the wood.*

The Princess was unwilling to be treated in this way, and tried to teach truth to the gentle, savage beings. But when she forbade them to worship her they made a god of her ass instead.

After a time there came to the forest a noble warlike knight named Satyrane. He was famed afar for strength and fearlessness, and had power to compel the wildest beasts to his will. This stout and gentle knight was filled with pity for Una, and one day when the satyrs had gone to pay their duty to old Sylvanus he led her away from the forest to the open plain.

Soon they met a pilgrim, worn and travel-stained, who had news for the Princess. The Red Cross Knight was dead—a victim to the dagger of the fierce Sansloy.

So great was the grief of the gentle Princess that it moved the heart of Satyrane to thoughts of vengeance. Leaving Una to follow him he pushed forward till he overtook Sansloy and charged him with the death of Saint George. The Saracen denied it, but dared Satyrane to fight. In a few moments the two had closed in deadly combat. Una now came in sight, and when he saw her Sansloy tried to free himself from his enemy, meaning to make the Princess a captive once more. But Satyrane foiled his purpose, and Una fled in fear, without a look behind.

Meanwhile, the old pilgrim, who was none other than

the wicked Archimago, stood in hiding, rejoicing at the mischief he had wrought.

After travelling many a weary mile, whom should the Princess meet but the dwarf who had left her for the Red Cross Knight. The mannikin bore the armour of his master, the helmet, shield, and buckler, and by this sign Una knew that evil had befallen her lord.

The dwarf told his tale, and a sad tale it was. The Red Cross Knight was a captive, imprisoned in a deep dungeon in the castle of Orgoglio, a hideous giant, the greatest and cruellest on the earth. Once again Una's heart was torn with sorrow, and twice she fell into a swoon, from which the dwarf with difficulty revived her.

But help was nigh at hand. Wandering once more through wood and valley the Princess chanced to meet a young and noble knight, whose glittering armour shone from far away. His name was Prince Arthur, and he was glorious to behold. His shield was one massive diamond; his helmet all of gold, with a golden-winged dragon as a crest; his breastplate shone with precious stones, like twinkling stars; his sword hung in an ivory sheath, and had a hilt of burnished gold. No magician had power over him, for shield and sword and armour had been wrought for him by the enchanter Merlin, of world-wide fame.

To Prince Arthur Una told her tale of sorrow. As a true and courteous knight he listened and promised help. "Be of good cheer, madam," he said graciously, "and take to yourself comfort; for till I have delivered your captive knight I will not forsake you." So they went forth with the dwarf for their guide.

VI.

In no long time they reached the castle of the giant, a building strong and high, whose gates were closely barred. Then Prince Arthur's squire took his horn, and blew such

a blast that every door of the castle flew open of its own accord.

Out came the giant, followed by the witch Duessa, who was mounted on a many-headed fiery dragon, and wore a crown and robes of royalty. At once Prince Arthur buckled him to the fight. The giant raised his mighty club, and brought it down with a crashing blow; but Arthur leaped aside, and the club threw up in the ground a furrow three yards deep.

Now the knight had the advantage of the giant, who for some time could not raise his club. So, with his blade all burning bright, he struck off the left arm of his enemy. The giant roared with pain, and the sound was as though a herd of bulls was raging.

To the help of his master came the many-headed beast, guided by the wicked witch Duessa. But the brave squire stepped before it, and with his body barred the way. Then the witch, by her spells, caused him to fall to the earth, and the cruel beast seized him with its greedy claws.

Prince Arthur ran to the rescue. Lifting high his blade, he struck off one of the dragon's heads. The beast, wallowing in a sea of blood, roared mightily, and writhed with pain. Duessa would have fallen, but the giant turned to her aid, and once more raised his club. Down it came with a hideous crash, struck the shield of the knight, and doubled him low to the ground.

But as he sank the veil which covered his shield fell away, and when the giant saw its blazing brightness

"He down let fall his arm, and soft withdrew
His weapon huge, that heav'd was on high
For to have slain the man that on the ground did lie."

Amazed at the flashing beams of that sunshiny shield the beast became stark blind, and tumbled on the dirty field. "O help, Orgoglio!" cried the witch—"help, or else we perish all." But the huge giant was too sorely amazed.

Prince Arthur leapt to his feet and struck off his left leg by the knee. Down fell the giant as falls a mighty castle that has been undermined; and then Prince Arthur struck off his head at a blow.

Duessa fell a prisoner to Prince Arthur's squire. Then the conqueror moved forward to the castle, and found no one within but an old man named Ignaro. To each question put to him the white-bearded man, who bore a bunch of rusty keys, replied: "I cannot tell." So Prince Arthur took the keys from him, and began to explore the castle.

After long search he found the Red Cross Knight in a deep, gloomy dungeon, wasted and worn with hunger and the deadly darkness. His sad, dull eyes could not for a while endure the daylight; his once brawny arms were consumed to skin and bone, his flesh was shrunken like withered flowers.

With joy and grief Una ran to greet him; but the joy overcame the grief, and with tender words she consoled him. Then, turning to the victorious champion, she begged of him to spoil Duessa of her royal robes, for she was the cause of all her woe. This was done, and the witch then appeared as she really was—a loathsome, wrinkled hag, ill-favoured and old, who fled from the place into the wilderness to hide her shame.

We cannot here tell in full of the joy of the Red Cross Knight and the Princess Una, nor of the praise which they gave to their deliverer. For some time they all rested, and then, having exchanged gifts, the knights separated, Arthur to seek for one whom he had once loved, Saint George to travel with her who had dared so many perils for love of him and desire for his true happiness.

VII.

When the first joy of his new-found freedom had passed the Red Cross Knight knew that he was no longer the warrior he had been. Not only was his bodily strength

spent and wasted, but his spirit was weak and his heart failed him for his sins; and, meeting with one who called himself Despair, he was advised by this wicked man to put an end to his misery.

But Una, ever his guardian angel, stayed his hand with words both of pity and of wrath at his faint-heartedness; then she gently led him to an ancient house not far away, known as the House of Holiness, where dwelt Dame Caelia and her three fair daughters—Fidelia, Speranza, and Charissa.

Here the Red Cross Knight was healed of his wounds, both of body and mind; here he gathered strength and power for his coming conflict with the dragon; here, too, he learnt that he was sprung from an ancient race of Saxon kings, and that in days to come men of England should fight and conquer, crying the war-cry of "Saint George for Merry England!"

Then Una grew mindful of her parents' need, and set out once more with her brave Knight, now ready to fight and prevail. Ere long she sighted the brazen tower in which her father and mother were imprisoned, and lying near the walls the huge dragon, whose hideous roaring filled all the air with terror.

Saint George bade Una withdraw for safety, and, full of strength and high spirit, spurred forward his horse to the conflict. It was well for the Knight that he had prepared himself for the battle, for many a brave warrior had tried in vain to pierce those brazen scales, had dared to enter that cloud of smothering smoke and sulphur fumes, and had fallen a victim to those hideous jaws, each set with three ranks of iron teeth. Yet nothing daunted the Knight who had lately sojourned in the House of Holiness.

Couching his steady spear, he ran fiercely at the dragon; the monster turned lightly, and with its long tail smote horse and man to the ground. Quickly they rose again, and the Knight struck the dragon with his spear. The blow was of

no avail; the dragon soared aloft, and, stooping, snatched up both horse and man to bear them right away.

For some distance they were borne, but the beast was forced by their struggling to loosen its hold. Then, putting three men's strength into his stroke, the Red Cross Knight smote the dragon close under the left wing. The spear pierced the hide; the monster roared with pain, and with his hideous claws he snatched the spear and broke it. Once again he tried to soar above his enemy, but his wounded wing prevented him, and he launched forth such a flake of fire that the brave Knight was sorely dismayed.

Faint, weary, and sore with heat and toil, the Red Cross Knight wished for death to overtake him. Then with a strong stroke of the dragon's tail he was hurled to the ground. The sun sank, darkness fell, and night came on apace. The dragon beat his iron wings, and sank down, deeming himself the victor.

But it chanced that the Knight had fallen into a wondrous stream, which trickled from a springing well, and which had power not only to heal deadly wounds, but even to restore the dead to life. So when the morning broke he rose renewed, and ready again for the battle.

Full of strength he fought once more, and before long sorely wounded the dragon's crested head. Then the monster pierced him through the shoulder with its dreadful sting, and, full of wrath, he smote its tail and hewed off five joints, leaving only the stump. Fiercely roared the monster and gripped the shield of the Knight, but with another stroke of might the hero severed the claw which held it. Flames and smoke that clouded the blue heavens issued from the dragon's mouth, and the Red Cross Knight recoiled, lost his footing, and sank wearied in the mire.

He fell this time near a marvellous tree, whence flowed a trickling stream of balm, which had the power to give life and health, and to heal deadly wounds; and near the tree the dragon dared not come. All night he lay within its

shadow, and then rose again, healed of his hurts and gaping wounds.

A third time the fight began. The monster opened its hideous jaws and advanced upon its foe. With one last strong stroke the Knight ran his bright blade through its mouth, and drew the life-blood. Down fell the monster, so that the earth did groan, and lay like a heaped-up mountain. So the Red Cross Knight won the glorious victory. And Una, drawing timidly near, gave praise to God and heart-felt thanks to her faithful champion.

How the happy pair sought the King and Queen within the brazen tower; how the people rejoiced at their deliverance and sang the praises of their deliverer; how the fair Princess Una was betrothed with joy to the Red Cross Knight and the two were wedded, despite the wiles and wicked enchantments of the angry Duessa, is too long a tale to tell.

ENGLAND.

THIS England never did, nor never shall,
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself.

Nought shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true.

From Shakespeare's "King John."

This royal throne of Kings, this scepter'd isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-Paradise,
This fortress, built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands,
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England.

From Shakespeare's "King Richard II."

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND.

YE mariners of England
That guard our native seas,
Whose flag has braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze !
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe !
And sweep through the deep
While the stormy tempests blow ;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy tempests blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave !
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And ocean was their grave.
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell,
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep
While the stormy tempests blow ;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy tempests blow.

Britannia needs no bulwark,
No towers along the steep ;
Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep,
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the floods below.
As they roar on the shore
When the stormy tempests blow ;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy tempests blow.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn ;
Till danger's troubled night depart
And the star of peace return

Then, then, ye ocean warriors !
Our song and feast shall flow,
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow ;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow !

Thomas Campbell.

THE TEMPEST.

I.

THERE was a certain island in the sea the only inhabitants of which were an old man, whose name was Prospero, and his daughter Miranda, a very beautiful young lady. She came to the island so young that she had no memory of having seen any other human face than her father's.

They lived in a cave, or cell, made out of a rock ; it was divided into several apartments, one of which Prospero called his study. There he kept his books, which chiefly treated of magic, a study at that time much affected by all learned men, and the knowledge of this art he found very useful to him ; for, being thrown by a strange chance upon this island, which had been enchanted by a witch called Sycorax, who died there a short time before his arrival, Prospero, by means of his art, released many good spirits that Sycorax had imprisoned in the bodies of large trees, because they had refused to obey her wicked commands. These gentle spirits were ever after obedient to the will of Prospero. Of these Ariel was the chief.

The lively little sprite Ariel had nothing mischievous in his nature, except that he took rather too much pleasure in tormenting an ugly monster called Caliban, for he owed him a grudge because he was the son of his old enemy Sycorax. This Caliban Prospero found in the woods, a strange misshapen thing, far less human in form than an

ape; he took him home to his cell and taught him to speak; and Prospero would have been very kind to him, but the bad nature which Caliban inherited from his mother, Sycorax, would not let him learn anything good or useful; therefore he was employed like a slave, to fetch wood and do the most laborious offices; and Ariel had the charge of compelling him to do these services.

When Caliban was lazy and neglected his work Ariel (who was invisible to all eyes but Prospero's) would come slyly and pinch him, and sometimes tumble him down in the mire; and then Ariel, in the likeness of an ape, would make mouths at him. Then, swiftly changing his shape, in the likeness of a hedgehog he would lie tumbling in Caliban's way, who feared the hedgehog's sharp quills would prick his bare feet. With a variety of such-like vexatious tricks Ariel would often torment him whenever Caliban neglected the work which Prospero commanded him to do.

Having these powerful spirits obedient to his will, Prospero could by their means command the winds and waves of the sea. By his orders they raised a violent storm, in the midst of which, and struggling with the wild sea-waves that every moment threatened to swallow it up, he showed his daughter a fine large ship, which he told her was full of living beings like themselves. "Oh, my dear father!" said she, "if by your power you have raised this dreadful storm, have pity on their sad distress! See, the vessel will be dashed to pieces! Poor souls! they will all perish. If I had power I would sink the sea beneath the earth, rather than the good ship should be destroyed, with all the precious souls within her."

"Be not amazed, daughter Miranda," said Prospero; "there is no harm done. I have so ordered it that no person in the ship shall receive any hurt. What I have done has been in care of you, my dear child. You are ignorant who you are or where you came from, and you

know no more of me but that I am your father and live in this poor cave. Can you remember a time before you came to this cell? I think you cannot, for you were not then three years of age."

"Certainly I can, sir," replied Miranda.

"By what?" asked Prospero—"by any other house or person? Tell me what you can remember, my child."

Miranda said: "It seems to me like the recollection of a dream. But had I not once four or five women who attended upon me?"

Prospero answered: "You had, and more. How is it that this still lives in your mind. Do you remember how you came here?"

"No, sir," said Miranda; "I remember nothing more."

"Twelve years ago, Miranda," continued Prospero, "I was Duke of Milan and you were a Princess and my only child. I had a younger brother, whose name was Antonio, to whom I trusted everything; and as I was fond of quiet and deep study I commonly left the management of my State affairs to your uncle, my false brother (for so indeed he proved). I, neglecting all worldly ends, buried among my books, did dedicate my whole time to the bettering of my mind. My brother Antonio, being thus in possession of my power, began to think himself the Duke indeed. The opportunity I gave him of making himself popular among my subjects awakened in his bad nature a proud ambition to deprive me of my dukedom. This he soon effected, with the aid of the King of Naples, a powerful Prince, who was my enemy."

"Wherefore," said Miranda, "did they not at that hour destroy us?"

"My child," answered her father, "they durst not, so dear was the love that my people bore me. Antonio carried us on board a ship, and when we were some leagues out at sea he forced us into a small boat, without either tackle, sail, or mast; there he left us, as he thought, to perish.

But a kind lord of my Court, one Gonzalo, who loved me, had privately placed in the boat water, provisions, apparel, and some books which I prize above my dukedom."

"Oh, my father," said Miranda, "what a trouble must I have been to you then!"

"No, my love," said Prospero, "you were a little cherub that did preserve me. Your innocent smiles made me to bear up against my misfortunes. Our food lasted till we landed on this desert island, since when my chief delight has been in teaching you, Miranda; and well have you profited by my instructions."

"Heaven thank you, my dear father!" said Miranda. "Now pray tell me, sir, your reason for raising this sea-storm."

"Know, then," said her father, "that by means of this storm my enemies, the King of Naples and my cruel brother, are cast ashore upon this island."

Having so said, Prospero gently touched his daughter with his magic wand, and she fell fast asleep, for the spirit Ariel just then presented himself before his master to give an account of the tempest and how he had disposed of the ship's company; and, though the spirits were always invisible to Miranda, Prospero did not choose she should hear him talking (as would seem to her) with the empty air.

II.

"Well, my brave spirit," said Prospero to Ariel, "how have you performed your task?"

Ariel gave a lively description of the storm and of the terrors of the mariners, and how the King's son, Ferdinand, was the first who leaped into the sea; and his father thought he saw his dear son swallowed up by the waves and lost.

"But he is safe," said Ariel, "in a corner of the isle, sitting with his arms folded, sadly lamenting the loss of the King, his father, whom he concludes drowned. Not a hair of his

head is injured, and his princely garments, though drenched in the sea-waves, look fresher than before."

"That's my delicate Ariel," said Prospero. "Bring him hither; my daughter must see this young Prince. Where is the King and my brother?"

"I left them," answered Ariel, "searching for Ferdinand, whom they have little hopes of finding, thinking they saw him perish. Of the ship's crew not one is missing, though each one thinks himself the only one saved; and the ship, though invisible to them, is safe in the harbour."

"Ariel," said Prospero, "thy charge is faithfully performed, but there is more work yet."

"Is there more work?" said Ariel. "Let me remind you, master, that you have promised me my liberty. I pray remember I have done you worthy service, told you no lies, made no mistakes, served you without grudge or grumbling."

"How now!" said Prospero. "You do not recollect what a torment I freed you from. Have you forgot the wicked witch Sycorax, who with age and envy was almost bent double? Where was she born? Speak—tell me!"

"Sir, in Algiers," said Ariel.

"Oh, was she so?" said Prospero. "I must tell you what you have been; I find you do not remember. This bad witch Sycorax, for her witchcrafts, too terrible to enter human hearing, was banished from Algiers, and here left by the sailors; and because you were a spirit too delicate to obey her wicked commands she shut you up in a tree, where I found you howling. This torment, remember, I did free you from."

"Pardon me, dear master," said Ariel, ashamed to seem ungrateful; "I will obey your commands."

"Do so," said Prospero, "and I will set you free." He then gave orders what further he would have him do, and away went Ariel, first to where he had left Ferdinand, and found him still sitting on the grass in the same melancholy posture.

"Oh, my young gentleman," said Ariel, when he saw him, "I will soon move you. You must be brought, I find, for the Lady Miranda to have a sight of your pretty person. Come, sir, follow me." He then began singing :

"Full fathom five thy father lies :
Of his bones are coral made ;
Those are pearls that were his eyes :
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change,
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell :
Hark, now I hear them, ding-dong-bell.

III.

This strange news of his lost father soon roused the Prince from the stupid fit into which he had fallen. He followed in amazement the sound of Ariel's voice till it led him to Prospero and Miranda, who were sitting under the shade of a large tree. Now, Miranda had never seen a man before except her own father.

"Miranda," cried Prospero, "tell me what you are looking at yonder."

"Oh father," said Miranda in a strange surprise, "surely that is a spirit ! See how it looks about ! Believe me, sir, it is a beautiful creature. Is it not a spirit ?"

"No, girl," answered her father ; "it eats and sleeps, and has senses such as we have. This young man you see was in the ship. He is somewhat altered by grief, or you might call him a handsome person. He has lost his companions, and is wandering about to find them."

Miranda, who thought all men had grave faces and gray beards like her father, was delighted with the appearance of this beautiful young Prince ; and Ferdinand, seeing such a lovely lady in this desert place, and from the strange sounds he had heard expecting nothing but wonders, thought he was

upon an enchanted island, and that Miranda was the goddess of the place, and as such he began to address her.

She timidly answered she was no goddess, but a simple maid, and was going to give an account of herself, when Prospero interrupted her. He was well pleased to find they admired each other, for he plainly perceived they had (as we say) fallen in love at first sight. But to try Ferdinand's constancy he made up his mind to throw some difficulties in their way; therefore, stepping forward, he addressed the Prince with a stern air, telling him he came to the island as a spy, to take it from him who was the lord of it. "Follow me," said he. "I will tie your neck and feet together. You shall drink sea-water; shell-fish, withered roots, and husks of acorns shall be your food."

"No," said Ferdinand, "I will resist such entertainment till I see a more powerful enemy;" and he drew his sword. But Prospero, waving his magic wand, fixed him to the spot where he stood, so that he had no power to move.

Miranda hung upon her father, saying: "Why are you so ungentle? Have pity, sir; I will be his surety. This is the second man I ever saw, and to me he seems a true one."

"Silence!" said her father. "One word more will make me chide you, girl. What! speak for an impostor? You think there are no more such fine men, having seen only him and Caliban. I tell you, foolish girl! most men as far excel this as he does Caliban." This he said to prove his daughter's constancy, and she replied: "My affections are most humble. I have no wish to see a goodlier man."

"Come on, young man," said Prospero to the Prince; "you have no power to disobey me."

"I have not, indeed," answered Ferdinand; and, not knowing that it was by magic he had lost all power of resistance, he was astonished to find himself so strangely compelled to follow Prospero. Looking back on Miranda as long as he could see her, he said, as he went after

Prospero into the cave: "My spirits are all bound up, as if I were in a dream; but this man's threats and the weakness which I feel would seem light to me if from my prison I might once a day behold this fair maid."

IV.

Prospero kept Ferdinand not long confined within the cell; he soon brought out his prisoner, and set him a severe task to perform, taking care to let his daughter know the hard labour he had imposed on him; and then, pretending to go into his study, he secretly watched them both.

Prospero had commanded Ferdinand to pile up some heavy logs of wood. Kings' sons not being much used to laborious work, Miranda soon after found her lover almost dying with fatigue.

"Alas!" said she, "do not work so hard. My father is at his studies; he is safe for these three hours. Pray rest yourself."

"Oh, my dear lady," said Ferdinand, "I dare not; I must finish my task before I take my rest."

"If you will sit down," said Miranda, "I will carry your logs the while." But this Ferdinand would by no means agree to. Instead of a help, Miranda became a hindrance, for they began a long conversation, so that the business of log-carrying went on very slowly.

Prospero, who had given Ferdinand this task merely as a trial of his love, was not at his books as his daughter supposed, but was standing by them invisible to overhear what they said. And he listened well pleased to a long speech of Ferdinand's, in which he professed to love Miranda above all the ladies he ever saw.

In answer to his praises of her beauty, which he said exceeded all the women in the world, she replied: "I do not remember the face of any woman, nor have I seen any more men than you, my good friend, and my dear father. How features are abroad I know not; but believe me, sir,



MIRANDA AND FERDINAND.
(From a print in the "Boydell" Shakespeare.)

I would not wish any companion in the world but you, nor can my imagination form any shape but yours that I could like. But, sir, I fear I talk to you too freely, and my father's precepts I forget."

At this Prospero smiled and nodded his head, as much as to say: "This goes on exactly as I could wish. My girl will be Queen of Naples."

And then Ferdinand in another fine long speech (for young Princes speak in courtly phrases) told the innocent Miranda he was heir to the crown of Naples, and that she should be his Queen."

"Ah, sir," said she, "I am a fool to weep at what I am glad of. I will answer you in plain and holy innocence. I am your wife, if you will marry me."

Prospero prevented Ferdinand's thanks by appearing visible before them.

"Fear nothing, my child," said he; "I have overheard, and approve of all you have said. And, Ferdinand, if I have too severely used you, I will make you rich amends by giving you my daughter. All your vexations were but my trials of your love, and you have nobly stood the test. Then, as my gift, which your true love has worthily purchased, take my daughter, and do not smile that I boast she is above all praise." He then, telling them that he had business which required his presence, desired they would sit down and talk together till he returned; and this command Miranda seemed not at all disposed to disobey.

V.

When Prospero left them he called his spirit Ariel, who quickly appeared before him, eager to relate what he had done with Prospero's brother and the King of Naples. Ariel said he had left them almost out of their senses with fear at the strange things he had caused them to see and hear. When fatigued with wandering about and famished

for want of food, he had suddenly set before them a delicious banquet, and then, just as they were going to eat, he appeared visible before them in the shape of a harpy, a greedy monster with wings, and the feast vanished away. Then, to their utter amazement, this seeming harpy spoke to them, reminding them of their cruelty in driving Prospero from his dukedom, and leaving him and his infant daughter to perish in the sea, saying that for this cause these terrors were suffered to afflict them.

The King of Naples and Antonio, the false brother, repented the injustice they had done to Prospero; and Ariel told his master he was certain their sorrow was sincere, and that he, though a spirit, could not but pity them.

"Then bring them hither, Ariel," said Prospero. "If you, who are but a spirit, feel for their distress, shall not I, who am a human being like themselves, have compassion on them? Bring them quickly, my dainty Ariel."

Ariel soon returned with the King, Antonio, and old Gonzalo in their train, who had followed him, wondering at the wild music he played in the air to draw them on to his master's presence. This Gonzalo was the same who had so kindly provided Prospero formerly with books and provisions, when his wicked brother left him, as he thought, to perish in an open boat in the sea.

Grief and terror had so stupefied their senses that they did not know Prospero. He first discovered himself to the good old Gonzalo, calling him the preserver of his life; and then his brother and the King knew he was the injured Prospero.

Antonio, with tears and sad words of sorrow and true repentance, begged his brother's forgiveness; and the King expressed his sincere remorse for having assisted Antonio to depose his brother. And Prospero forgave them, and upon their engaging to restore his dukedom he said to the King of Naples, "I have a gift in store for you, too;" and,

opening a door, showed him his son Ferdinand playing at chess with Miranda.

Nothing could exceed the joy of the father and the son at this unexpected meeting, for they each thought each other drowned in the storm. "Oh, wonder!" said Miranda; "what noble creatures these are! It must surely be a brave world that has such people in it."

The King of Naples was almost as much astonished at the beauty and excellent graces of the young Miranda as his son had been.

"Who is this maid?" said he. "She seems the goddess that has parted us and brought us thus together."

"No, sir," answered Ferdinand, smiling to find his father had fallen into the same mistake that he had done when he first saw Miranda; "she is mortal, but by immortal Providence she is mine. I chose her when I could not ask you, my father, for your consent, not thinking you were alive. She is the daughter to this Prospero, who is the famous Duke of Milan; of whose renown I have heard so much, but never saw him till now. Of him I have received a new life; he has made himself to me a second father, giving me this dear lady."

"Then I must be her father," said the King. "But, oh! how oddly will it sound that I must ask my child's forgiveness!"

"No more of that," said Prospero. "Let us not remember our troubles past, since they so happily have ended." And then Prospero embraced his brother, and again assured him of his forgiveness, and said that a wise Providence had permitted that he should be driven from his poor dukedom of Milan that his daughter might inherit the Crown of Naples, for that by their meeting in this desert island it had happened that the King's son had loved Miranda.

These kind words which Prospero spoke, meaning to comfort his brother, so filled Antonio with shame and

remorse that he wept, and was unable to speak; and the kind old Gonzalo wept to see this joyful reunion, and prayed for blessings on the young couple.

Prospero now told them that their ship was safe in the harbour, and the sailors all on board her, and that he and his daughter would accompany them home the next morning. "In the meantime," said he, "partake of such refreshments as my poor cave affords, and for your evening entertainment I will relate the history of my life from my first landing in this desert island." He then called for Caliban to prepare some food and set the cave in order, and the company were astonished at the uncouth form and savage appearance of this ugly monster, who, Prospero said, was the only attendant he had to wait upon him.

Before Prospero left the island he dismissed Ariel from his service, to the great joy of that lively little sprite, who, though he had been a faithful servant to his master, was always longing to enjoy his free liberty, to wander at will in the air, like a wild bird, under green trees, among pleasant fruits and sweet-smelling flowers.

"My quaint Ariel," said Prospero to the little sprite, when he made him free, "I shall miss you, yet you shall have your freedom."

"Thank you, my dear master," said Ariel; "but give me leave to attend your ship home with prosperous gales before you bid farewell to the assistance of your faithful spirit. And then, master, when I am free, how merrily I shall live!"

Here Ariel sang this pretty song:

"Where the bee sucks, there suck I
In a cowslip bell I lie:
There I couch when owls do cry.
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily shall I live now
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough."

Prospero then buried deep in the earth his magical books and wand, for he was resolved never more to make use of the magic art. And, having thus overcome his enemies, and being reconciled to his brother and the King of Naples, nothing now remained to complete his happiness but to revisit his native land, to take possession of his dukedom, and to witness the happy marriage of his daughter Miranda and Prince Ferdinand, which the King said should be instantly celebrated with great splendour on their return to Naples. At which place, under the safe convoy of the spirit Ariel, they, after a pleasant voyage, soon arrived.

From "Tales from Shakespeare," by Charles and Mary Lamb.

THE DIVERTING HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN.

Showing how he went farther than he intended, and came safe home again.

JOHN GILPIN was a citizen
Of credit and renown,
A trainband captain eke was he
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear,
"Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
No holiday have seen.

"To-morrow is our wedding-day,
And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton,
All in a chaise and pair.

"My sister, and my sister's child,
Myself and children three,
Will fill the chaise; so you must ride
On horseback after we."

He soon replied,—“ I do admire
Of womankind but one,
And you are she, my dearest dear,
Therefore it shall be done.

“ I am a linen-draper bold,
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the calender*
Will lend his horse to go.”

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin,—“ That’s well said ;
And for that wine is dear,
We will be furnished with our own,
Which is both bright and clear.”

John Gilpin kissed his loving wife ;
O’erjoyed was he to find,
That, though on pleasure she was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
But yet was not allowed
To drive up to the door, lest all
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stayed,
Where they did all get in ;
Six precious souls, and all agog
To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels
Were never folk so glad,
The stones did rattle underneath,
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse’s side
Seized fast the flowing mane,
And up he got, in haste to ride,
But soon came down again ;

* Strictly a calender er, a person who uses a calender, a machine for pressing and smoothing cloth.—Skeat.

For saddle-tree scarce reached had he,
 His journey to begin,
 When, turning round his head, he saw
 Three customers come in.

So down he came ; for loss of time,
 Although it grieved him sore,
 Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,
 Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers
 Were suited to their mind,
 When Betty screaming came down stairs,—
 "The wine is left behind!"

"Good lack!" quoth he, "yet bring it me,
 My leathern belt likewise,
 In which I bear my trusty sword
 When I do exercise."

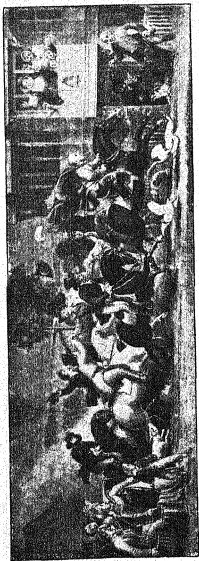
Now Mistress Gilpin (careful soul!)
Had two stone bottles found,
 To hold the liquor that she loved,
 And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
 Through which the belt he drew,
 And hung a bottle on each side,
 To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be
 Equipped from top to toe,
 His long red cloak, well brushed and neat,
 He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
 Upon his nimble steed,
 Full slowly pacing o'er the stones,
 With caution and good heed.

But finding soon a smoother road
 Beneath his well-shod feet,
 The snorting beast began to trot,
 Which galled him in his seat.



T. Stothard, R.A.

JOHN GILPIN'S RIDE.

So "Fair and softly," John he cried,
 But John he cried in vain ;
 That trot became a gallop soon,
 In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must
 Who cannot sit upright,
 He grasped the mane with both his hands,
 And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort
 Had handled been before,
 What thing upon his back had got
 Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought ;
 Away went hat and wig :
 He little dreamt, when he set out,
 Of running such a rig.

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
 Like streamer long and gay.
 Till, loop and button failing both,
 At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern
 The bottles he had slung ;
 A bottle swinging at each side,
 As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children screamed,
 Up flew the windows all ;
 And every soul cried out, "Well done !"
 As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he ?
 His fame soon spread around :
 "He carries weight !" "He rides a race !"
 "'Tis for a thousand pound !"

And still, as fast as he drew near,
 'Twas wonderful to view,
 How in a trice the turnpike men
 Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
 His reeking head full low,
 The bottles twain behind his back
 Were shattered at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
 Most piteous to be seen,
 Which made his horse's flanks to smoke
 As they had basted been.

But still he seemed to carry weight,
 With leathern girdle braced ;
 For all might see the bottle necks
 Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington,
 These gambols he did play,
 Until he came unto the Wash
 Of Edmonton so gay ;

And there he threw the Wash about
 On both sides of the way,
 Just like unto a trundling mop,
 Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton, his loving wife
 From the balcony* spied
 Her tender husband, wondering much
 To see how he did ride.

"Stop, stop, John Gilpin !—Here's the house !"
 They all at once did cry ;
 "The dinner waits, and we are tired :"—
 Said Gilpin—"So am I !"

But yet his horse was not a whit
 Inclined to tarry there ;
 For why ?—his owner had a house
 Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,
 Shot by an archer strong ;
 So did he fly—which brings me to
 The middle of my song.

* This word was once pronounced in this way by educated people.

Away went Gilpin, out of breath,
 And sore against his will,
 Till, at his friend the calender's,
 His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amazed to see
 His neighbour in such trim,
 Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
 And thus accosted him :—

“What news? what news? your tidings tell;
 Tell me you must and shall——
 Say why bareheaded you are come,
 Or why you come at all?”

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,
 And loved a timely joke;
 And thus unto the calender,
 In merry guise, he spoke:

“I came because your horse would come;
 And, if I well forebode,
 My hat and wig would soon be here,—
 They are upon the road.”

The calender, right glad to find
 His friend in merry pin,
 Returned him not a single word,
 But to the house went in;

Whence straight he came with hat and wig:
 A wig that flowed behind,
 A hat not much the worse for wear,
 Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and, in his turn,
 Thus showed his ready wit:
 “My head is twice as big as yours,
 They therefore needs must fit.

“But let me scrape the dirt away
 That hangs upon your face;
 And stop and eat, for well you may
 Be in a hungry case.”

Said John,—“ It is my wedding-day,
 And all the world would stare;
 If wife should dine at Edmonton,
 And I should dine at Ware.”

So turning to his horse, he said,
 “ I am in haste to dine ;
 ’Twas for your pleasure you came here,
 You shall go back for mine.”

Ah ! luckless speech, and bootless boast,
 For which he paid full dear ;
 For while he spake, a braying ass
 Did sing most loud and clear.

Whereat his horse did snort, as he
 Had heard a lion roar,
 And galloped off with all his might,
 As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
 Went Gilpin’s hat and wig :
 He lost them sooner than at first,
 For why?—they were too big.

Now Mistress Gilpin, when she saw
 Her husband posting down
 Into the country far away,
 She pulled out half a crown ;

And thus unto the youth she said,
 That drove them to the Bell,
 “ This shall be yours, when you bring back
 My husband safe and well.”

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
 John coming back again ;
 Whom in a trice he tried to stop
 By catching at his rein ;

But not performing what he meant,
 And gladly would have done,
 The frightened steed he frightened more,
 And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
 Went postboy at his heels,
 The postboy's horse right glad to miss
 The lumbering of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road,
 Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
 With postboy scampering in the rear,
 They raised the hue and cry :

" Stop thief ! stop thief !—a highwayman !"
 Not one of them was mute ;
 And all and each that passed that way
 Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turnpike-gates again
 Flew open in short space ;
 The toll-men thinking as before,
 That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,
 For he got first to town ;
 Nor stopped till where he had got up
 He did again get down.

Now let us sing long live the King,
 And Gilpin long live he ;
 And when he next doth ride abroad,
 May I be there to see !

William Cowper.

THE STORY OF MACBETH.

I.

THERE was once a King of Scotland called Duncan, a very good old man. He had two sons : one was called Malcolm, and the other Donaldbane. But King Duncan was too old to lead out his army to battle, and his sons were too young to help him.

At this time Scotland, and, indeed, France and England, and all the other countries of Europe, were much harassed by the Danes. These were a very fierce, warlike people, who sailed from one place to another, and landed their armies on the coast, burning and destroying everything wherever they came. They were heathens, and did not believe in the Bible, but thought of nothing but battle and slaughter, and making plunder.

When they came to countries where the inhabitants were cowardly, they took possession of the land, as the Saxons took possession of Britain. At other times they landed with their soldiers, took what spoil they could find, burned the houses, and then got on board, hoisted sails, and away again. They did so much mischief that people put up prayers to God in the churches to deliver them from the rage of the Danes.

Now, it happened in King Duncan's time that a great fleet of these Danes came to Scotland and landed their men in Fife, and threatened to take possession of that province. So a numerous Scottish army was levied to go to fight against them. The King, as I told you, was too old to command his army, and his sons were too young. He therefore sent out one of his near relations, who was called Macbeth; he was son of Finel, who was Thane, as it was called, of Glamis. The governors of provinces were at that time, in Scotland, called thanes; they were afterwards termed earls.

This Macbeth, who was a brave soldier, put himself at the head of the Scottish army, and marched against the Danes. And he carried with him a relation of his own, called Banquo, who was a Thane of Lochaber, and was also a very brave man. So there was a great battle fought between the Danes and the Scots; and Macbeth and Banquo, the Scottish generals, defeated the Danes, and drove them back to their ships, leaving a great many of their soldiers both killed and wounded. Then Macbeth

and his army marched back to a town in the North of Scotland, called Forres, rejoicing on account of their victory.

Now, there lived at this time three old women in the town of Forres, whom people looked upon as witches, and supposed they could tell what was to come to pass. Nobody would believe such folly nowadays, except ignorant creatures, such as those who consult gipsies in order to have their fortunes told; but in those early times the people were much more ignorant, and even great men, like Macbeth, believed that such persons as these witches of Forres could tell what was to come to pass afterwards, and listened to the nonsense they told them, as if the old women had really been prophetesses. The old women saw that they were respected and feared, so that they were tempted to impose upon people by pretending to tell what was to happen to them, and they got presents for doing so.

So the three old women went and stood by the wayside, in a great moor, or heath, near Forres, and waited till Macbeth came up. And then, stepping before him as he was marching at the head of his soldiers, the first woman said: "All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!" The second said: "All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!" Then the third, wishing to pay him a higher compliment than the other two, said: "All hail, Macbeth! thou shalt be King of Scotland!" Macbeth was very much surprised to hear them give him these titles: and while he was wondering what they could mean, Banquo stepped forward and asked them whether they had nothing to tell about him as well as about Macbeth. And they said that he should not be so great as Macbeth, but that, though he himself should never be a King, yet his children should succeed to the throne of Scotland, and be Kings for a great number of years.

Before Macbeth recovered from his surprise, there came a messenger to tell him that his father was dead, so that he was become Thane of Glamis by inheritance. And there

came a second messenger, from the King to thank Macbeth for the great victory over the Danes, and tell him that the Thane of Cawdor had rebelled against the King, and that the King had taken his office from him, and had sent to make Macbeth Thane of Cawdor as well as of Glamis. Thus, the two first old women seemed to be right in giving him those two titles. I dare say they knew something of the death of Macbeth's father, and that the government of Cawdor was intended for Macbeth, though he had not heard of it.

However, Macbeth, seeing a part of their words come to be true, began to think how he was to bring the rest to pass and make himself King, as well as Thane of Glamis and Cawdor. Now, Macbeth had a wife who was a very ambitious, wicked woman, and when she found out that her husband thought of raising himself up to be King of Scotland she encouraged him in his wicked purpose by all the means in her power, and persuaded him that the only way to get possession of the crown was to kill the good old King Duncan.

Macbeth was very unwilling to commit so great a crime, for he knew what a good Sovereign Duncan had been; and he recollected that he was his relation, and had been always very kind to him, and had intrusted him with the command of his army, and had bestowed on him the government or thanedom of Cawdor. But his wife continued telling him what a foolish, cowardly thing it was in him not to take the opportunity of making himself King, when it was in his power to gain what the witches promised him. So the wicked advice of his wife and the prophecy of these wretched old women at last brought Macbeth to think of murdering his King and his friend. The way in which he accomplished his crime made it still more abominable.

II.

Macbeth invited Duncan to come to visit him at a great castle near Inverness, and the good King, who had no suspicions of his kinsman, accepted the invitation very willingly. Macbeth and his lady received the King and all his retinue with much appearance of joy, and made a great feast, as a subject would do to make his King welcome. About the middle of the night the King desired to go to his apartment, and Macbeth conducted him to a fine room which had been prepared for him. Now, it was the custom in those barbarous times that, wherever the King slept, two armed men slept in the same chamber, in order to defend his person in case he should be attacked by anyone during the night. But the wicked Lady Macbeth had made these two watchmen drink a great deal of wine, and had besides put some drugs into the liquor, so that when they went to the King's apartment they both fell asleep, and slept so soundly that nothing could awaken them.

Then the cruel Macbeth came into King Duncan's bedroom about two in the morning. It was a terrible stormy night, but the noise of the wind and of the thunder did not awaken the King, for he was old and weary with his journey; neither could it awaken the two sentinels, who were stupefied with the liquor, and the drugs they had swallowed. They all slept soundly. So Macbeth, having come into the room, and stepped gently over the floor, slew poor old King Duncan.

When Malcolm and Donaldbane, the two sons of the good King, saw their father slain within Macbeth's castle, they became afraid that they might be put to death likewise, and fled away out of Scotland. Donaldbane fled into some distant islands; but Malcolm, the eldest son of Duncan, went to the Court of England, where he begged for assistance from the English King to place him on the throne of Scotland as his father's successor.

In the meantime Macbeth took possession of the kingdom of Scotland, and thus all his wicked wishes seemed to be fulfilled. But he was not happy. He began to reflect how wicked he had been in killing his friend and benefactor, and how some other person, as ambitious as he was himself, might do the same thing to him. He remembered, too, that the old women had said that the children of Banquo should succeed to the throne after his death, and therefore he concluded that Banquo might be tempted to conspire against him, as he had himself done against King Duncan. The wicked always think other people are as bad as themselves.

In order to prevent this supposed danger, Macbeth hired ruffians to watch in a wood where Banquo and his son Fleance sometimes used to walk in the evening, with instructions to attack them and kill both father and son. The villains did as they were ordered by Macbeth; but while they were killing Banquo, the boy Fleance made his escape from their wicked hands, and fled from Scotland into Wales. And it is said that, long afterwards, his children came to possess the Scottish crown.

Macbeth was not the more happy that he had slain his brave friend and cousin, Banquo. He knew that men began to suspect the wicked deeds which he had done, and he was constantly afraid that someone would put him to death as he had done his old Sovereign, or that Malcolm would obtain assistance from the King of England and come to make war against him, and take from him the Scottish kingdom. So, in this great perplexity of mind, he thought he would go to the old women, whose words had first put into his mind the desire of becoming a King.

It is to be supposed that he offered them presents, and that they were cunning enough to study how to give him answer which should make him continue in the belief that they could prophesy what was to happen in future times. So they answered that he should not be conquered, or lose

the crown of Scotland, until a great forest, called Birnam Wood, should come to attack a strong castle situated on a hill called Dunsinane, in which castle Macbeth commonly resided. Now, the hill of Dunsinane is upon the one side of a great valley, and the forest of Birnam is upon the other. There are twelve miles distance betwixt them; and, besides that, Macbeth thought it was impossible that the trees could ever come to the assault of the castle. He therefore resolved to fortify his castle on the hill of Dunsinane very strongly, as being a place in which he would always be sure to be safe. For this purpose he caused all his great nobility and thanes to send in stones, and wood, and other things wanted in building, and to drag them with oxen up to the top of the steep hill where he was building the castle.

Now, among other nobles who were obliged to send oxen, and horses, and materials to this laborious work was one called Macduff, the Thane of Fife. Macbeth was afraid of this thane, for he was very powerful, and was accounted both brave and wise, and Macbeth thought he would most probably join with Prince Malcolm if ever he should come from England with an army. The King, therefore, had a private hatred against the Thane of Fife, which he kept concealed from all men, until he should have some opportunity of putting him to death, as he had done Duncan and Banquo. Macduff, on his part, kept upon his guard, and went to the King's Court as seldom as he could, thinking himself never safe unless he was in his own castle of Kenno-way, which is on the coast of Fife, near to the mouth of the Firth of Forth.

It happened, however, that the King had summoned several of his nobles, and Macduff, the Thane of Fife, amongst others, to attend him at his new castle of Dunsinane, and they were all obliged to come; none dared stay behind. Now, the King was to give the nobles a great entertainment, and preparations were made for it. In the

meantime Macbeth rode out with a few attendants to see the oxen drag the wood and stones up the hill for enlarging and strengthening the castle. So they saw most of the oxen trudging up the hill with great difficulty (for the ascent is very steep), and the burdens were heavy, and the weather was extremely hot.

At length Macbeth saw a pair of oxen so tired that they could go no further up the hill, but fell down under their load. Then the King was very angry, and demanded to know who it was among his thanes that had sent oxen so weak and so unfit for labour when he had so much work for them to do. Someone replied that the oxen belonged to Macduff, the Thane of Fife. "Then," said the King, in great anger, "since the Thane of Fife sends such worthless cattle as these to do my labour, I will put his own neck into the yoke, and make him drag the burdens himself."

There was a friend of Macduff who heard these angry expressions of the King, and hastened to communicate them to the Thane of Fife, who was walking in the hall of the King's castle while dinner was preparing. The instant that Macduff heard what the King had said he knew he had no time to lose in making his escape, for whenever Macbeth threatened to do mischief to anyone he was sure to keep his word.

So Macduff snatched up from the table a loaf of bread, called for his horses and his servants, and was galloping back to his own province of Fife before Macbeth and the rest of the nobility were returned to the castle. The first question which the King asked was what had become of Macduff, and being informed that he had fled from Dunsinane, he ordered a body of his guards to attend him, and mounted on horseback himself to pursue the thane, with the purpose of putting him to death.

III.

Macduff in the meantime fled as fast as his horse's feet could carry him ; but he was so ill provided with money for his expenses that when he came to the great ferry over the river Tay he had nothing to give to the boatmen who took him across, excepting the loaf of bread which he had taken from the King's table. The place was called for a long time afterwards the Ferry of the Loaf.

When Macduff got into his province of Fife, which is on the other side of the Tay, he rode on faster than before towards his own castle of Kennoway, which, as I told you, stands close by the seaside, and when he reached it the King and his guards were not far behind him. Macduff ordered his wife to shut the gates of the castle, draw up the drawbridge, and on no account to permit the King or any of his soldiers to enter. In the meantime he went to the small harbour belonging to the castle, and caused a ship which was lying there to be fitted out for sea in all haste, and got on board himself in order to escape from Macbeth.

In the meantime Macbeth summoned the lady to surrender the castle and to deliver up her husband. But Lady Macduff, who was a wise and brave woman, made many excuses and delays until she knew that her husband was safely on board the ship, and had sailed from the harbour. Then she spoke boldly from the wall of the castle to the King, who was standing before the gate still demanding entrance, with many threats of what he would do if Macduff was not given up to him.

"Do you see," she said, "yon white sail upon the sea ? Yonder goes Macduff to the Court of England. You will never see him again till he comes back with young Prince Malcolm to pull you down from the throne and to put you to death. You will never be able to put your yoke, as you threatened, on the Thane of Fife's neck."

Some say that Macbeth was so much incensed at this

bold answer that he and his guards attacked the castle and took it, killing the brave lady and all whom they found there. But others say, and I believe more truly, that the King, seeing that the fortress of Kennoway was very strong, and that Macduff had escaped from him and was embarked for England, returned to Dunsinane without attempting to take the castle. The ruins are still to be seen, and are called Thane's Castle.

There reigned at that time in England a very good King called Edward the Confessor. I told you that the Prince Malcolm, the son of Duncan, was at his Court, soliciting assistance to recover the Scottish throne. The arrival of Macduff greatly aided the success of his petition, for the English King knew that Macduff was a brave and a wise man. As he assured Edward that the Scots were tired of the cruel Macbeth, and would join Prince Malcolm if he were to return to his country at the head of an army, the King ordered a great warrior, called Siward, Earl of Northumberland, to enter Scotland with a large force and assist Prince Malcolm in the recovery of his father's crown.

Then it happened just as Macduff had said; for the Scottish Thanes and nobles would not fight for Macbeth, but joined Prince Malcolm and Macduff against him; so that at length he shut himself up in his castle of Dunsinane, where he thought himself safe, according to the old women's prophecy, until Birnam Wood should come against him. He boasted of this to his followers, and encouraged them to make a valiant defence, assuring them of a certain victory. At this time Malcolm and Macduff were come as far as Birnam Wood, and lay encamped there with their army. The next morning, when they were to march across the broad valley to attack the castle of Dunsinane, Macduff advised that every soldier should cut down a bough of a tree and carry it in his hand, that the enemy might not be able to see how many men were coming against them.

Now the sentinel who stood on Macbeth's castle-wall,

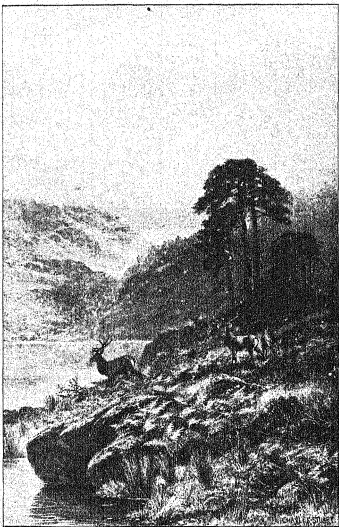
when he saw all these branches which the soldiers of Prince Malcolm carried, ran to the King and informed him that the wood of Birnam was moving towards the castle of Dunsinane. The King at first called him a liar, and threatened to put him to death; but when he looked from the walls himself, and saw the appearance of a forest approaching from Birnam, he knew the hour of his destruction was come. His followers, too, began to be disheartened and to fly from the castle, seeing their master had lost all hopes.

Macbeth, however, recollected his own bravery, and sallied desperately out at the head of the few followers who remained faithful to him. He was killed, after a furious resistance, fighting hand to hand with Macduff in the thick of the battle. Prince Malcolm mounted the throne of Scotland, and reigned long and prosperously. He rewarded Macduff by declaring that his descendants should lead the vanguard of the Scottish army in battle and place the crown on the King's head at the ceremony of coronation. King Malcolm also created the Thanes of Scotland Earls, after the title of dignity adopted in the Court of England.

Sir W. Scott.

MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS.

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer;
A-chasing the wild deer, and following the roe—
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.
Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North!
The birthplace of valour, the country of worth;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.



THE LAND OF HILLS AND GLENS

(From the picture by Charles Stuart, by permission of Messrs. H. Graves and Co.)

Farewell to the mountains high covered with snow !
 Farewell to the straths and green valleys below !
 Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods !
 Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods !
 My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here,
 My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer ;
 A-chasing the wild deer, and following the roe—
 My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

Robert Burns

THE WANDERINGS OF ROBERT BRUCE.

I.

ROBERT BRUCE, King of Scotland, fought with the English at Methven, was defeated, and driven to wander in the wild country of the West. He had with him a few hundred faithful followers, and all went in daily peril of their lives, for their enemies were many and watchful.

In a certain place where Bruce was in hiding lived three brothers who had sworn to slay the King or die in the attempt. They were known to be the bravest and hardiest men in the country-side, stout, strong, and fearless.

These three men, who were called the Macindrossers—that is, the sons of the door-keeper—spied out the King's camp, and lay in ambush that they might set upon him while his band was on the march. They chose a spot near a loch by the side of which ran a narrow path at the foot of a steep brae.

Down this path came the followers of Bruce in single file, and the three men in ambush waited till the whole company had passed by. Behind them, at some distance, rode the King, little dreaming that his enemies were near. A turn of the path hid his men from his view as he rode quietly between the green wooded brae and the blue spark-

ling waters of the loch. So narrow was the path that there was not room to turn his horse.

Suddenly the three men leapt from their hiding-place. One of them seized the King's horse by the bridle. The animal reared, and Bruce seemed like to fall. But, quick as thought, the King drew his sword, and with a mighty blow he cut off the man's arm at the shoulder. Another of the brothers caught Bruce by the ankle and tried to draw his foot from the stirrup, with the hope of throwing him from his horse. The King felt the man's hand between his foot and the stirrup, and suddenly raised himself from the saddle. Thus he caught the man's hand as in a trap. Then he urged forward his horse, and the man was dragged after him with his body trailing on the earth.

Meanwhile the third brother had leapt upon the horse behind the King, who was now in great danger. But he turned in the saddle, seized the assassin, and dragged him forward. Then with his sword he smote him strongly on the head, so that he fell dead to the earth. Another blow at the man whom he held prisoner at his stirrup, and the King was free.

II.

At a later time the King was wandering in the south-west, and certain men of Galloway made up their minds to take him. They knew that the followers of Bruce numbered at that time only sixty men, and thought therefore that the wandering King would be easily taken.

They secretly gathered together to the number of two hundred, and took with them a bloodhound to help them in their search. Surely, they thought, the King could not now escape them.

An attempt was made to surprise him. But Bruce knew of their coming long before they drew near to his retreat, for he had sent out spies in all directions. He therefore left his hiding-place as the night drew on, and led his men

across a stream to a morass in which he found a spot where they could not be readily discovered.

"Here ye shall abide," he said to his men, "and rest you for a while. Myself will go and watch. If I hear aught of their coming I will warn you." Taking only two men with him, he went back to the ford where his men had crossed. There he kept a strict watch for the hunters, but for a long time there was no sign of their coming. He crept quietly along the margin of the stream for some distance. On either side rose a high wooded hill, which sloped down to the edge of the water. No other ford could he find but the one where he and his company had crossed, and at this ford it was not possible for more than one man to land at a time.

Turning to his two men, Bruce bade them return to join their comrades, for he wished to watch by himself. "Sire," asked they, "who, then, shall bear you company?" "God alone," answered the King, "and none other. Pass on, for such is my will." The men obeyed, and Bruce was left alone.

When the King had lain for some time in silence he heard in the distance the baying of a hound. Nearer and nearer the sound came, but Bruce did not leave his post. He knew that his men would be asleep, and he was unwilling to waken them until he was quite certain that their enemies were coming.

So long he stood listening that the men of Galloway were upon him almost before he knew it. Only the stream lay between him and them, and now there was no time to warn his followers. If he left the ford for a moment his enemies would be able to cross, so he resolved to remain and make a stand, to hold the passage of the stream against two hundred men.

Several horsemen now rode into the water and made for the landing-place where Bruce was standing. The first that drew near the King pierced with his spear. Down he sank

into the stream, while his horse stumbled and then fell. With a second strong blow the King slew the horse, which lay so as to hinder the advance of the others, who were pressing on from behind.

On they came with loud cries of "On him!" Bruce darted forward, and dealt about him such mighty strokes that five men fell before him, and the rest drew back in dismay.

"What shall we say," asked one, "when we come home and tell how one man fought all our company? Shame upon us if we fall back before him, though his sword-strokes are wondrous strong!"

Once again they gathered together, and crying, "On him! he cannot last!" they came on to the attack. The King was sorely pressed, but neither heart nor strength failed him. Right and left swung his mighty blade, and in a few moments the pass was filled up with the bodies of the slain.

The men of Galloway drew off. There was no reaching the King, so many of their comrades lay dead before him. So one man fought two hundred and prevailed.

III.

At Linlithgow there was a strong castle which was held by the English. The Scots wished to take it for King Robert, who was at that time at Perth. The place was well filled with English soldiers and strongly guarded. But the Scots won it by the following means:

Not far away lived a farmer named William Bunnock, who often supplied the castle with hay. This man greatly wished to see the English driven from Linlithgow, for they used to sally forth from the castle and ravage the country far and near.

He therefore advised some of his friends to lie in ambush on the first day on which he took hay into the castle.

Beneath this hay he would hide eight stout and hardy men upon whom he could depend. Then when the wain had safely passed the castle gate he would give the signal for attacking the guard. Once the way into the castle was won the men in ambush might sally forth and trust to the strength of their strong right arms.

It was harvest-time and the corn stood ripe for the reaper. In a field hard by the castle the English had made hay for their horses, and wished to have it taken within the castle gates. They asked Bunnock to carry it, and he gladly consented. He promised to come on the following day with a waggon larger than he had ever before used for the purpose.

That night he sent word secretly to his friends, who quickly made ready, and before morning dawned a number of them were lying in ambush not far from the main gateway of the castle. The farmer had also loaded his wain before daybreak, skilfully heaping the hay so as to hide the eight men, and yet allow them to breathe.

When the sun arose a number of the English left the castle to reap the corn in a field not far away. Then Bunnock set out with his wain, which was driven by a stout fellow armed with a hatchet.

As the waggon was drawing near to the castle the porter looked out and at once opened the gates. When it was half-way through the gateway Bunnock gave the signal. "Thief!" he cried. "Call all! Call all!" and at the same moment he struck the porter dead at his feet.

Out leapt the men who had been hidden among the hay. In a few moments the men in the castle-yard were slain. Those who were lying in ambush near rushed through the gateway, and before many minutes had passed the castle of Linlithgow was in the hands of the farmer and his men.

Told from Barbour's Poem of "The Brus."

ROSABELLE.

O LISTEN, listen, ladies gay !
No haughty feat of arms I tell ;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

" Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew !
And, gentle lady, deign to stay !
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

" The blackening wave is edged with white ;
To inch and rock the sea-mews fly ;
The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.

" Last night the gifted Seer did view
A wet shroud swathed round lady gay ;
Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch ;
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day ?"

" 'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
To night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my lady mother there
Sits lonely in her castle hall.

" 'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide
If 'tis not filled by Rosabelle."

O'er Roslin all that dreary night
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam ;
'Twas broader than the watchfire's light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen ;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheath'd in his iron panoply.

Seem'd all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale ;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose carved buttress fair :
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high Saint Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle :
Each one the holy vault doth hold,
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle.

And each Saint Clair was buried there,
With candle, with book, and with knell ;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild waves sung
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

Sir W. Scott

HUNTING SONG.

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day,
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk, and horse, and hunting-spear !
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain gray,
Springlets in the dawn are streaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming :



THE MORNING OF THE CHASE.

(From the picture by F. Taylor, P.R.W.S., by permission of Messrs. H. Graves and Co.)

And foresters have busy been,
To track the buck in thicket green ;
Now we come to chant our lay,
" Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the green-wood haste away ;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot and tall of size ;
We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers fray'd ;
You shall see him brought to bay,
" Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay !
Tell them youth, and mirth, and glee
Run a course as well as we ;
Time, stern huntsman ! who can baulk,
Staunch as hound, and fleet as hawk :
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

Sir W. Scott.

NON ANGLI SED ANGELI.

TOWARDS the close of the sixth century there lived in Rome a good priest named Gregory, who became in time the head of the Roman Catholic Church. One day, before he had attained to this high office, he was wandering about the market-place of Rome, where there were collected articles of merchandise of every kind, and captives who had been brought to the city from all parts of the known world.

Among the slaves who were offered for sale Gregory noticed some boys of fair complexion and ruddy countenances and with hair of remarkable beauty, silken, glossy, waving with curls of gold. On asking who and from whence these children were, he was told that they were

Angles from the island of Britain. "Not Angles, but angels" ("Non Angli sed angeli"), murmured the good priest, gazing with pleasure at the fair beauty of the little strangers. Then he asked from what part of Britain they had been brought, and was told that they were from Deira, in the north of the land. "It is well," he answered. "May they be truly withdrawn from the anger (*de irā*) of the living God and called to the mercy of Christ."

"How, then, is the King of that province called?" inquired Gregory in conclusion, and it was told him that the name of the King was Ælla. "That is Alleluia,"* he quickly rejoined. "It is meet that the praises of God should be sung in those parts."

Told from Bede's "Ecclesiastical History."

THE WRECK OF THE WHITE SHIP.

IN this voyage† a sad disaster happened, which caused much lamentation and innumerable tears to flow. Thomas, the son of Stephen, had obtained an audience of the King, and, offering him a gold mark, said to him: "Stephen, the son of Airard, was my father, and during the whole of his life he was in your father's service as a mariner. He it was who conveyed your father to England, in his own ship, when he crossed the sea to make war on Harold. He was employed by your father in services of this description as long as he lived, and gave him such satisfaction that he honoured him with liberal rewards, so that he lived in great credit and prosperity among those of his own class. My Lord King, I ask you to employ me in the same service,

* So Wordsworth sings, when recalling the incident:

"Subjects of Saxon Ælla, they shall sing
Glad Hallelujahs to the eternal King."

† The return voyage of Henry I. to England in 1120 after his campaign in France.

having a vessel called the *Blanche-Nef*, which is fitted out in the best manner, and well suited to receive a royal retinue." The King replied: "I grant your request; but I have already selected a ship which suits me, and I shall not change. However, I entrust to you my sons, William and Richard, whom I love as myself, with many of the nobility of my realm."

The mariners were in great glee at hearing this, and, greeting the King's son with fair words, asked him to give them something to drink. The Prince gave orders that they should have three measures of wine. No sooner was the wine delivered to them than they had a great drinking bout, and, pledging their comrades in full cups, took too much and became intoxicated.

By the King's command many Barons with their sons embarked in the *Blanche-Nef*, and there were in all, as far as I can learn, three hundred souls on board. But several came on shore, having left the vessel upon observing that it was overcrowded with riotous and headstrong youths. The crew consisted of fifty experienced rowers, besides an armed force, who were very disorderly, and, as soon as they got on board, insolently took possession of the benches of the rowers, and, being very drunk, forgot their station, and scarcely paid respect to anyone. Alas! how many among the company embarked were without the slightest feeling of devotion towards God—

"Who rules the storm, and calms the raging sea."

Besides the King's treasure and some casks of wine there was no cargo in Thomas's ship, which was full of passengers, and they urged him to use his utmost endeavours to overtake the royal fleet, which was already ploughing the waves. In his drunken folly Thomas, confident in his seamanship and the skill of his crew, rashly boasted that he would soon leave behind him all the ships that had started before them.

At last he gave the signal for departure. The sailors seized the oars without a moment's delay, and made the ship rush through the water at a great rate. But as the drunken rowers exerted themselves to the utmost in pulling the oars, and the luckless pilot steered at random, and got the ship out of its due course, the starboard bow of the *Blanche-Nef* struck violently on a huge rock, which is left dry every day when the tide is out, and covered by the waves at high water. Two planks having been shattered by the crash, the ship, alas! filled and went down.

At this fearful moment the passengers and crew raised cries of distress, but their mouths were soon stopped by the swelling waves, and all perished together, except two who seized hold of the yard from which the sail was set. They hung on to it the greater part of the night, in earnest hope that they would receive aid in some shape or other. One of these men was a butcher of Rouen, the other a young man of gentle birth whose name was Geoffrey.

* * * * *

The melancholy news soon got abroad among the common people, and, spreading along the sea-coast, came to the ears of Count Theobald and other lords of the Court; but for that day no one ventured to make it known to the King, who was in a state of great anxiety, and made many inquiries. The nobles shed many tears in private, and were inconsolable for the loss of their friends and relatives; but in the King's presence, severe as was the struggle, they concealed their grief lest its causes should be discovered.

On the day following, by a well-devised plan of Count Theobald's, a boy threw himself at the King's feet, weeping bitterly, and, upon his being questioned as to the cause of his sorrow, the King learnt from him of the shipwreck of the *Blanche-Nef*. So sudden was the shock, and so severe his anguish, that he instantly fell to the ground; but, being raised up by his friends, he was conducted to his chamber, and gave free course to the bitterness of his grief. Not

Jacob was more woe-stricken for the loss of Joseph, nor did David give vent to more woeful lamentations for the murder of Ammon or Absalom.

CRECY.

Of the Battle of Crecy, between the King of England and the French King.

THE English, who were in three battalions, lay on the ground to rest themselves. As soon as they saw the French approach they rose upon their feet, fair and easily, without any haste, and put their battalions in order. In the first, which was led by the Prince,* the archers stood in the form of a triangle with the men-at-arms behind them. The Earl of Northampton and the Earl of Arundel, with the second battalion, were on one wing in good order, ready to help the Prince if need should arise.

The lords and knights of France came not to the battle in good order, for some came before and some came after in such haste and disorder that one hindered the other. When the French King saw the Englishmen, his countenance changed, and he said to his marshals: "Make the cross-bowmen go in before, and begin the battle in the name of God and Saint Denis."

There were of these Genoese cross-bowmen about fifteen thousand, but they were so weary of going on foot that day for six leagues, armed with their cross-bows, that they said to their leaders: "We are not ready to fight, nor to do any great deed of arms, for we have need of rest." These words came to a Norman noble, who cried: "A man is indeed happy to be cumbered with such rascals as these, who faint and fail when the need is sorest!"

* Edward, known in history as the Black Prince.

At that moment there came a great rain, and sudden darkness with loud thunder, and before the rain there came flying over the field a great number of crows, which feared the coming of the tempest. Then the air began to grow clear, and the sun to shine fair and bright; moreover, it shone in the eyes of the Frenchmen and on the Englishmen's backs.

When the Genoese had gathered together and began to approach, they made a great leap and a loud cry to frighten the Englishmen; but they stood still and stirred not. Then the Genoese the second time made a leap and a cry, and moved forward a little; but the Englishmen stirred not a foot. A third time they leapt and cried, and moved forward till they came within bowshot, then they shot fiercely with their crossbows.

The English archers now made one pace forward and let fly their arrows so thickly that it seemed as if it snowed; and when the Genoese felt the arrows piercing their heads, arms, and breasts, many of them cast down their crossbows and cut the strings and retired in disorder. The French King saw them fly, and cried: "Slay these rascals, for they hinder and trouble us without reason!" Then the men-at-arms dashed in among them and killed a great number of them.

And still the English shot their arrows where they saw the thickest press. The sharp arrows pierced the men-at-arms and into their horses; and many fell, both horse and men, who, when they were down, could not rise again, so great was the crowd.

The valiant King of Bohemia, although he was almost blind, when he knew how the battle went, said to those about him: "Where is the Lord Charles, my son?" His knights said: "Sir, we cannot tell, but we think he is fighting." Then he said: "Sirs, ye are my men, my companions and friends, this day. I pray you bring me so far forward that I may strike one stroke with my sword."

They said they would do as he commanded, and, in order that they might not lose him in the press, they tied all the reins of their horses together; then they set the King in front, and charged upon their enemies. King Charles pressed eagerly forward, and was able to strike more than one stroke with his good sword. Those with him also fought valiantly, but, being cut off from their own party, the King and all were slain, and next day they were found in the place with all their horses tied together.

Meanwhile certain Frenchmen overcame the archers of the Prince's battalion, and came and fought with the men-at-arms hand to hand. Then the second battalion of the Englishmen came to succour the Prince, and a messenger was sent to King Edward, who was on a little windmill hill.

"Sire," said the knight to the King, "those who are about the Prince your son are fiercely assailed and sorely pressed; wherefore they desire that you and your battalion will come and aid them; for if the Frenchmen increase, as no doubt they will, your son and they will have much to do."

Then the King said: "Is my son dead, or hurt, or felled to the earth?" "No, sire," said the knight; "but he is heavily matched, and hath need of your help." "Well," said the King, "return to him, and to them that sent you hither, and tell them to send no more to me for any adventure that befalleth, as long as my son is alive, and say to them, also, that they suffer him this day to win his spurs; for if God be pleased, I desire the day and the honour thereof to be to him and to those about him." So the knight returned to them and reported the King's words, which greatly encouraged them.

The enemy fought valiantly that day, every lord under his own banner, but finally they could not resist the prowess of the Englishmen, and so many were slain that in the evening the French King had left about him no more than threescore. Among these was Sir John of Hainault, who had remounted the King once when his horse was slain

with an arrow. Then he said to the King: "Sire, depart hence, for it is time; lose not yourself wilfully; if you have loss at this time you shall recover it again in due season." Then he took the King's horse by the bridle and led him away by force.

The King rode till he came to the castle of Broyes, but the gate was closed because it was by that time dark. Then the King called the captain, who came to the walls and said: "Who is it that calleth at this time of night?" and the King answered: "Open your gate quickly, for this is the fortune of France." The captain, knowing then that it was the King, opened the gate and let down the bridge. So the King entered, and five barons with him, but he would not tarry there, and, having drunk, he departed thence about midnight, and so rode till he came in the morning to Amiens, where he rested.

On this day the Englishmen never moved from their battalions to chase any man, but ever kept the field and defended themselves against all who came to assail them; this battle ended about the time of evensong.

From Froissart's Chronicles.

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC.

I.

OF Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone;
By each gun the lighted brand,
In a bold, determined hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.

II.

Like Leviathans afloat
Lay their bulwarks on the brine,
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line
It was ten of April morn by the chime ;
As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death,
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.

III.

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene ;
And her van the fleetest rushed
O'er the deadly space between.
"Hearts of oak !" our captain cried ; when each gun
From its adamant lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

IV.

Again—again—again !
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back.
Their shots along the deep slowly boom,
Then cease, and all is wail
As they strike the shattered sail,
Or, in conflagration pale,
Light the gloom.

V.

Out spoke the victor then,
As he hailed them o'er the wave ;
"Ye are brothers ! ye are men !
And we conquer but to save ;

So peace instead of death let us bring.
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet
With the crews, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King."

VI.

Then Denmark blessed our chief,
That he gave her wounds repose ;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildly rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the day.
While the sun looked smiling bright
O'er a wide and woeful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

VII.

Now joy, old England raise !
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
While the wine-cup shines in light ;
And yet, amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep,
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore !

VIII.

Brave hearts ! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died,
With the gallant good Riou.
Soft sigh the winds of heaven o'er their grave,
While the billow mournful rolls
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave !

T. Campbell.

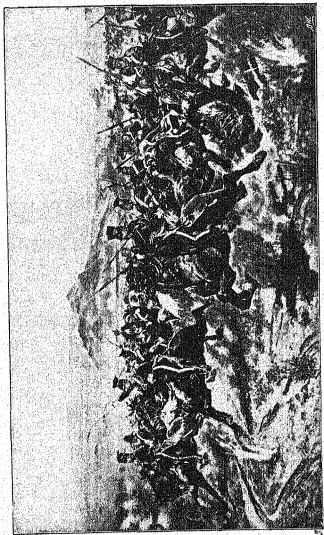
THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
"Forward the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!" he said;
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

"Forward the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Someone had blunder'd;
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die;
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd;
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;



THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.
(By R. Caton Woodville, R.I., by permission of Messrs. H. Graves and Co.)

Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made !
All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made !
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred !

A. Tennyson.

RIP VAN WINKLE.

I.

WHOEVER has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Catskill Mountains. They are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather—indeed every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the

weather is fair and settled they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but sometimes, when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapours about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists in the early times of the province, and there were some of the houses of the first settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weather-cocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple, good-natured fellow of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the Siege of Fort Christina. He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple, good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbour, and an obedient, hen-pecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity.

Certain it is that he was a great favourite among all the good wives of the village, who took his part in all family squabbles, and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He

assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him, and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighbourhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an aversion to all kinds of profitable labour. It could not be from the want of perseverance, for he would sit on a wet rock with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill or down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbour even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone fences. The women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm. It was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his field than anywhere else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some outdoor work to do; so that though his paternal estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst farm in the neighbourhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels clad in his father's cast-off clothes, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled disposition, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled his life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that by frequent use had grown into a habit: he shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife, so that he was fain to draw off his forces and take to the outside of the house—the only side which in truth belongs to a hen-pecked husband.

II.

Rip's sole domestic friend was his dog Wolf, who was as much hen-pecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honourable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods; but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house

his crest fell, his tail dropped to the ground or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle he would fly yelping to the door.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself when driven from home by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village, which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn designated by a portrait of His Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long, lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveller. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper, learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary! and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place!

The opinions of this junta were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree, so that the neighbours could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sundial. It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His followers, however, perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When anything that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send

forth short, frequent, and angry puffs; but when pleased he would inhale the smoke slowly and peacefully, and emit it in light and placid clouds; and sometimes, taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapour curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect agreement.

From even this stronghold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his wife, who would suddenly break in upon the peace of the company and call the members all to naught. Nor was Nicholas Vedder himself sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair, and his only way of escape from the labour of the farm and clamour of his wife was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, for whom he felt as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf!" he would say; "thy mistress leads thee a dog's life of it. But never mind, my lad; whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee." Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face, and, if dogs can feel pity, I verily believe he pitied his master with all his heart.

III.

In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Catskill Mountains. He was after his favourite sport of squirrel shooting, and the still solitudes echoed and re-echoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far,

far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud or the sail of a lagging bark here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a steep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend he heard a voice from a distance hallooing: "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked round, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air: "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" At the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and, giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt a vague fear stealing over him; he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely place, but, supposing it to be someone of the neighbourhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach he was still more surprised at the stranger's appearance. He was a short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the old Dutch fashion—a cloth jerkin strapped round the waist, several pairs of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulder

a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied at once, and, helping one another, they clambered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent.

As they ascended Rip now and then heard long rolling peals, like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft, between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but, supposing it to be the muttering of one of those passing thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud. During the whole time Rip and his companion had laboured in silence; for, though the former marvelled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and mysterious about the unknown that inspired awe and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheatre new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the centre was a company of odd-looking personages playing at nine-pins. They were dressed in a quaint, outlandish fashion; some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches of similar style to that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar: one had a large beard, broad face, and small piggyish eyes; the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colours. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with

a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a faced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting in the parlour of Dominie Van Shaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip was that, though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they kept the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were withal the saddest party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such fixed, statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-lustre countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and made signs to him to wait upon the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees Rip's awe and fear subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavour of excellent Hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another, and he repeated his visits to the flagon so often that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

IV.

On waking he found himself on the green knoll whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes; it was a bright sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft and breasting the pure mountain breeze. "Surely," thought Rip, "I have not slept here all night." He recalled what had happened before he fell asleep. The strange man with the keg of liquor; the mountain ravine; the wild retreat among the rocks; the woe-begone party at nine-pins; the flagon—"Oh, that flagon! that wicked flagon!" thought Rip. "What excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle?"

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean, well-oiled fowling-piece he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel encrusted with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roysters of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and, having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared; but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him and shouted his name, but all in vain; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of last evening's gambol, and, if he met with any of the party, to demand his dog and gun. As he rose to walk he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "Those mountain beds do not agree with me," thought Rip; "and if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of rheumatism I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle." With some difficulty he got down into the glen. He found the gully up which he and his companions had ascended the preceding evening, but, to his astonishment, a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however,

made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras, and witch-hazel, and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grape-vines that twisted their coils or tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheatre, but no trace of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high unbroken wall, over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog. He was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice, and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done? The morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun; he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head shouldered the rusty fire-lock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with everyone in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast their eyes upon him invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture led Rip to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long.

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, not one of which

he recognised for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered; it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors; strange faces at the windows; everything was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but the day before. There stood the Catskill Mountains; there ran the silver Hudson at a distance; there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been. Rip was sorely perplexed. "That flagon last night," thought he, "has addled my poor head sadly!"

It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay, the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed. "My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me!"

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty and forlorn. This desolateness overcame all his fears. He called loudly for his wife and children; the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

V.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn, but it, too, was gone. A large, rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted, "The Union

Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle." Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore there now was reared a tall naked pole with something on the top that looked like a red nightcap, and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes. All this was very strange. He recognised on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe; but even this was singularly altered. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, quarrelsome tone about it, instead of the accustomed drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco-smoke instead of idle speeches, or Van Bummel the schoolmaster, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean, bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of handbills, was talking loudly about rights of citizens, elections, members of congress, liberty, Bunker's Hill, heroes of seventy-six, and other words which were a perfect jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and an army of women and children at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern politicians. They crowded round, eyeing him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired on which side he voted. Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear whether he was Federal or Democrat. Rip was equally at a loss to under-

stand the question, when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in a harsh tone, what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village. "Alas, gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat amazed, "I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the King, God bless him!"

Here a general shout burst from the bystanders: "A Tory! a Tory! a spy! a refugee! Hustle him! away with him!" It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and, having done so, demanded again of the unknown culprit what he came there for, and whom he was seeking. The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbours, who used to keep about the tavern.

"Well, who are they? Name them."

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired: "Where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was silence for a little while, when an old man replied in a thin, piping voice: "Nicholas Vedder? Why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the churchyard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone, too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

"Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war. Some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point; others say he was drowned in a squall at the foot of Antony's Nose. I don't know; he never came back again."

"Where's Van Bummel, the schoolmaster?"

"He went off to the wars, too; was a great militia General, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him, too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand—war, Congress, Stony Point. He had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair: "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?"

"Oh, Rip Van Winkle!" exclaimed two or three. "Oh, to be sure! That's Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked, and beheld an exact counterpart of himself as he went up the mountain, apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name.

"God knows!" exclaimed he, at his wits' end. "I'm not myself—I'm somebody else—that's me yonder—no—that's somebody else got into my shoes. I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and everything's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am."

VI.

The bystanders began now to look at each other, nod, wink, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper also about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief, at the very suggestion of which the self-important man in the cocked hat retired with some speed. At this critical moment a fresh, comely woman pressed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. "Hush! Rip," cried she, "hush! the old man won't hurt you." The name of

the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice, all awakened a train of recollections in his mind. "What is your name, my good woman?" asked he.

"Judith Gardenier."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man! Rip Van Winkle was his name. But it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since. His dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask, but he put it with a faltering voice:

"Where's your mother?"

"Oh, she, too, had died but a short time since. She broke a bloodvessel in a fit of passion at a New England pedlar."

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. "I am your father!" cried he. "Young Rip Van Winkle once—old Rip Van Winkle now! Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle?"

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and, peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed: "Sure enough it is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself! Welcome home again, old neighbour! Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him but as one night. The neighbours stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks; and the self-important man in the cocked hat, who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head, upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighbourhood. He recollected Rip at once, and proved his story true in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact that the Catskill Mountains had always been haunted by strange beings; that it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson, the first discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the *Half Moon*, being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river and the great city called by his name; that his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at nine-pins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard one summer afternoon the sound of their balls, like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up, and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug, well furnished house, and a stout, cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm, but showed a disposition to attend to anything else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits. He soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favour.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can be idle without blame, he took his place once more on the bench at the inn door, and was revered as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a

chronicler of the old times "before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to understand the strange events that had taken place during his torpor. How that there had been a great war; that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England; and that, instead of being a subject of His Majesty George the Third, he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; the changes of States and Empires made but little impression on him. But there was one kind of despotism under which he had long groaned, and happily that was at an end; he could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed at first to vary on some points every time he told it, which was doubtless owing to his having so recently awaked. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighbourhood but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his mind, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day they never hear a thunderstorm of a summer afternoon about the Catskill, but they say that Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of nine-pins; and it is a common wish of all hen-pecked husbands in the neighbourhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

From Washington Irving's "Sketch Book" (very slightly adapted).

HIAWATHA'S SAILING.

"GIVE me of your bark, O Birch-Tree!
Of your yellow bark, O Birch-Tree!
Growing by the rushing river,
Tall and stately in the valley!
I a light canoe will build me,
Build a swift Cheemaun for sailing,
That shall float upon the river,
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily!

"Lay aside your cloak, O Birch-Tree!
Lay aside your white-skin wrapper,
For the summer-time is coming,
And the sun is warm in heaven,
And you need no white-skin wrapper!"

Thus aloud cried Hiawatha
In the solitary forest,
By the rushing Taquamenaw,
When the birds were singing gaily,
In the Moon of Leaves* were singing,
And the sun, from sleep awaking,
Started up and said, "Behold me!
Geexis, the great Sun, behold me!"

And the tree with all its branches
Rustled in the breeze of morning,
Saying, with a sigh of patience,

"Take my cloak, O Hiawatha!"

With his knife the tree he girdled;
Just beneath its lowest branches,
Just above the roots he cut it,
Till the sap came oozing outward;
Down the trunk, from top to bottom,
Sheer he cleft the bark asunder,
With a wooden wedge he raised it,
Stripped it from the trunk unbroken.

* The month of May.

" Give me of your boughs, O Cedar !
 Of your strong and pliant branches,
 My canoe to make more steady,
 Make more strong and firm beneath me !"

Through the summit of the Cedar
 Went a sound, a cry of horror,
 Went a murmur of resistance ;
 But it whispered, bending downward,

" Take my boughs, O Hiawatha !"

Down he hewed the boughs of cedar,
 Shaped them straightway to a framework,
 Like two bows he formed and shaped them,
 Like two bended bows together.

" Give me of your roots, O Tamarack !
 Of your fibrous roots, O Larch-Tree !
 My canoe to bind together,

So to bind the ends together,
 That the water may not enter,
 That the river may not wet me !"

And the Larch, with all its fibres,
 Shivered in the air of morning,
 Touched its forehead with its tassels,
 Said, with one long sigh of sorrow,

" Take them all, O Hiawatha !"

From the earth he tore the fibres,
 Tore the tough roots of the Larch-Tree
 Closely sewed the bark together,
 Bound it closely to the framework.

" Give me of your balm, O Fir-Tree !
 Of your balsam and your resin,
 So to close the seams together
 That the water may not enter,
 That the river may not wet me !"

And the Fir-Tree, tall and sombre,
 Sobbed through all its robes of darkness,
 Rattled like a shore with pebbles,
 Answered wailing, answered weeping,

" Take my balm, O Hiawatha !"

And he took the tears of balsam,
 Took the resin of the Fir-Tree,

Smeared therewith each seam and fissure,
Made each crevice safe from water.

"Give me of your quills, O Hedgehog !
All your quills, O Kagh, the Hedgehog !
I will make a necklace of them,
Make a girdle for my beauty,
And two stars to deck her bosom !

From a hollow tree the Hedgehog
With his sleepy eyes looked at him,
Shot his shining quills like arrows,
Saying, with a drowsy murmur,
Through the tangle of his whiskers,

"Take my quills, O Hiawatha !"

From the ground the quills he gathered,
All the little shining arrows,
Stained them red and blue and yellow
With the juice of roots and berries ;
Into his canoe he wrought them,
Round its waist a shining girdle,
Round its bows a gleaming necklace,
On its breast two stars resplendent.

Thus the Birch Canoe was builded
In the valley, by the river,
In the bosom of the forest ;
All the forest's life was in it,
All its mystery and its magic,
All the lightness of the birch-tree,
All the toughness of the cedar,
All the larch's supple sinews ;
And it floated on the river
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily.

Paddles none had Hiawatha,
Paddles none he had or needed,
For his thoughts as paddles served him.
And his wishes served to guide him ;
Swift or slow at will he glided,
Veered to right or left at pleasure.

Then he called aloud to Kwasind,
To his friend, the strong man, Kwasind,

Saying "Help me clear this river
Of its sunken logs and sandbars."

Straight into the river Kwasind
Plunged as if he were an otter,
Dived as if he were a beaver,
Stood up to his waist in water,
To his arm-pits in the river,
Tugged at sunken logs and branches,
With his hands he scooped the sandbars,
With his feet the ooze and tangle.

And thus sailed my Hiawatha,
Down the rushing Taquamenaw,
Sailed through all its bends and windings,
Sailed through all its deeps and shallows,
While his friend, the strong man, Kwasind,
Swam the deeps, the shallows waded.

Up and down the river went they,
In and out among its islands,
Cleared its bed of root and sandbar,
Dragged the dead trees from its channel,
Made its passage safe and certain,
Made a pathway for the people,
From its springs among the mountains,
To the waters of Pauwating,
To the bay of Taquamenaw.

From H. W. Longfellow's "Song of Hiawatha."

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

BETWEEN the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

HIAWATHA'S SAILING

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper and then a silence ;
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway—
A sudden raid from the hall—
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall !

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair ;
If I try to escape they surround me—
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse Tower on the Rhine.

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old moustache as I am
Is not a match for you all ?

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you for ever,
Yea, for ever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away !

H. W. Longfellow.

SONG.

STAY, stay at home, my heart, and rest,
Home-keeping hearts are happiest,
For those that wander they know not where
Are full of trouble and full of care ;
To stay at home is best.

Weary and homesick and distressed,
They wander east, they wander west,
And are baffled and beaten and blown about
By the winds of the wilderness of doubt ;
To stay at home is best

Then stay at home, my heart, and rest ;
The bird is safest in its nest ;
O'er all that flutter their wings and fly
A hawk is hovering in the sky ;
To stay at home is best.

H. W. Longfellow.

SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.

A. Tennyson.

THE CANTERBURY PILGRIMAGE.

(See pp. 104, 105.)

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